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THE
RANGERS OF THE MOHAWK.

A TALE OF CHERRY VALLEY.

BY EDWARD S. ELLIS,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING DIME NOVELS:

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345 THE LONG TRAIL.
347 THE PHANTOM TRAIL.
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376 PHANTOM HORSEMAN.
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THE RANGERS OF THE MOHAWK.

CHAPTER I.

THE FORT AND ITS DEFENDER.

ON a spring morning, in the year 1777, the forests in Northern Central New York resounded with the tramp of armed men. Fort Schuyler, standing on the site of the present town of Rome, had been occupied by Colonel Gansevoort, with his regiment of patriots. The British General, St. Leger, was on his way to invest it. His division had been collected at Oswego, and, as was the case with all offensive bodies under British leaders coming in from Canada, a large part of it was composed of Tories and Indians. The latter were drawn mostly from the Six Nations, although representatives of other tribes were not wanting.

At night their camp-fires lit up the wood, as if at a carnival. From every direction were heard the boisterous shout, the laugh and the song, which awakened the forest echoes for miles. On the outskirts of the army, traveling as their erratic fancy dictated, were the Indians. Dark, sullen, vindictive, they mingled little with the reckless soldiers around them, although fighting for the royal cause with demoniac fury. Sometimes alone, and sometimes in bands, they wandered miles away to attack the lonely cabin, or to make some raid into an exposed settlement, generally returning at nightfall, and slumbering by the camp-fires of their leaders.

Fort Schuyler stood on the site of old Fort Stanwix. Its fortifications were not completed when St. Leger proceeded to invest it. The brave Colonel Gansevoort, however, threw up the best protection which time permitted, and retired within, resolved to hold the post at all cost. His situation was critical in the extreme, as starvation was a foe not to be conquered.

Fully aware of this the American General, Herkimer, with a regiment of militia, marched to Gansevoort's relief. The General encountered the foe at Oriskany, where he found a large force of Tories and Indians under command of Colonel Butler and Brandt, the Indian chief.

The battle which followed was fiercely contested on both sides. Among the Tories were many excellent sharpshooters. General Herkimer soon received a mortal wound. Left without their leader, the militia broke and fled down the Mohawk the Indians and Tories in full pursuit. At this battle were perpetrated barbarities which rendered the name of Oriskany a by-word among the avenging patriots. "Remember Oriskany!" was often the answer to the vain prayer of some imploring wretch, as he knelt before his conqueror.

General Herkimer being defeated, the siege of Fort Schuyler was pressed by St. Leger, with every means at his command. He sat down in front of it, raised batteries, and bombarded it with a determination that seemingly would not be thwarted. But the patriots held out against all his attacks. The most trained warriors of the Mohawks could not catch the sentinels at fault. Many a red-skin, who spent half the night in stealing up to the fortification, received a bullet through his head for his reward; many an artful Mohawk, who availed himself of some cunning contrivance, by which he hoped to deceive the Americans, was riddled through and through at the very moment he was counting upon triumph.

There were men behind the walls of Fort Schuyler who understood woodcraft, men who had before encountered the Indians, and who were not to be deceived by any red-skin invention. All knew the demoniac hate of the Tories and savages too well to place themselves voluntarily in their power.

The siege progressed slowly. Growing impatient, St. Leger sent repeated threats to Colonel Gansevoort, assuring him that the place must fall, and that, in case he and his men persisted in holding out, he, St. Leger, could not be responsible for any excesses of the Indians. This gentle insinuation failing to make any impression, St. Leger followed it with several others more forcible, and finally declared that if the Fort was

not surrendered by a certain time, he should proceed to carry it at any risk. Once taken, he proposed to consign its defenders to the mercies of the savages, who, by this continued baffling of their plans, were completely infuriated. To each and all of these threats the same answer was returned. If St. Leger wished the fort he was advised to take it.

CHAPTER II.

A CONFERENCE.

A CAYUGA Indian and a white man were seated beneath a branching tree one morning, in close intercourse. It was a morning in May, and the siege had been in progress for some weeks. The white man, who was no other than Walter Butler, was stretched upon the ground, smoking a short, black pipe, while the face of the savage was as stolid and motionless as stone.

"Them infernal rebels hold out amazingly, Thugwan! When we *do* lay hands on 'em, I reckon there'll be a lot of toasting done. Did you try to steal up to the place last night?"

"Thugwan no go there—shoot two-tree-four Mohawk last night."

"There is a report in camp that that dare-devil, General Arnold, has been sent by Schuyler to attack us. If that's the case, I'm to the thinkin' that there'll be warm times in this neighborhood. Do you hear anything about it?"

"Dat so—runners come in—see dem comin' t'rough de woods!"

"Wal, let 'em come, is all I have to say. Hello—"

There was a commotion among the branches overhead and, looking up, Captain Butler saw the attenuated legs of some person, winding around and insinuating themselves among the limbs, as they descended toward him. The next moment Honoyost Schuyler, a sort of half-witted personage, dropped lightly before him.

"What brings you here?" demanded the Captain.

"Haw! haw! haw! did I scare you chaps?" inquired the gaunt countryman, with one of his broad laughs. "I reckon I have been roostin' into that ere tree for half the night."

"What made you go up there?"

"I managed to steal into camp, and thought I would wait till daybreak afore going any further, as I might git shot Haw! haw! haw!"

"Where do you come from?"

"Cherry Valley, I reckon."

"Eh!" exclaimed the Tory, becoming interested at once. "And what news do you bring?"

"Nothin' but that there's a mighty heap of rebels there, and they're gettin' sassier every day toward us."

"We have plenty of friends there, too?"

"Yes, but they ain't doin' nothin. If you'd only go among 'em, Captain, and stir 'em up like, you might get a big lot of recruits there."

"Colonel Butler has issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Cherry Valley, and I shall go down there to-morrow to distribute it, and perhaps make a few addresses to the people."

"Now do, Captain; it's the best thing on yearth."

"How does old Mr. Gordon and his daughter get along?"

"Splendid, Captain, 'though the gal haint looked as well of late," added Honyost, in a grave tone.

"What's up?"

"I don't say anything, but then I have my suspicions."

"Out with them?"

"You mustn't be flattered when I tell you it's because she hain't seen you for a considerable time."

Captain Butler laughed, and uttered a profane exclamation, but it was evident that he was extremely pleased. There was no question but that he regarded the girl with more than ordinary emotion, and was extremely jealous of Captain Heath, who, he knew, was an occasional visitor at the family.

"How about that rebel that sometimes goes there?"

"Haw! haw! don't the old man hate him? I must say the gal, howsumever, treats him polite like, while Gordon himself, you know, has such ideas about manners that he

wouldn't turn him out doors if he was General Washington himself."

"I'd give anything I've got, if I could only git that man into my hands for half an hour."

"Haw! haw! you can do't, Captain."

The Tory sprung to his feet, and in great excitement, demanded

"What do you meam? Explain yourself."

"Why, it's just here. You see Captain Heath belongs to Colonel Gansevoort's regiment, in the Fort there. He had a furlough, but didn't know St. Leger was coming down from Oswego. As soon as he larned it, he put out to jine 'em. He's been around here a dozen times, trying to steal up to the fort and get in, but the Mohawks are too wide awake. Then he comes down to Cherry Valley, and makes Edith Gordon a call, then comes back, hoping he may find a chance awaiting him."

"Where is he now?"

"Somewhere in the woods between here and the Valley. You'll stand a chance of getting him. Haw! haw! haw!"

"But he has an infernal Oneida with him, hasn't he? The two gave me a hot chase when I came here."

"He hain't got but one," replied Honyost. "Can't you take half a dozen?"

It begun to dawn through the head of the Tory Captain that he was receiving instruction from the ungainly, half-witted being before him. The probability that had been held out of the capture of his hated rival, roused the demon in him, and he was hardly capable of composed thought for a few moments. While debating with himself, Honyost Schayler was seeking amusement by whistling and rolling around upon the greensward, the Cayuga surveying him all the while with the indifference and calm contempt of his stoical race.

"I'll see Colonel Butler, and find out whether we can't start to-day," said Captain Butler. "You wait here Honyost, until I return."

CHAPTER III.

THE PROCLAMATION.

"HAW! haw! haw! that'll fetch 'em, Captain."

"Yes, I'm of the opinion that'll stir 'em up," replied the individual addressed, carefully folding up a document and tucking it in his pocket. It was Captain Butler, who, with Honyost Schuyler and a half-dozen Indians of the Six Nations, was encamped upon the northern bank of the Mohawk. Colonel Butler having issued a proclamation, addressed to the inhabitants of Cherry Valley, his brother, the Captain, had been appointed to the delicate and dangerous duty of circulating it. Taking Honyost Schuyler and the savages mentioned, he set out for the Valley, and had progressed thus far upon his journey. Several times he had mounted upon a fallen tree, or some other eminence, and, with the proclamation in hand (which by this time was well committed to memory), declaimed it in tones loud enough to be heard far and near. On such occasions the demonstrative Honyost manifested extreme delight, clapping his hands, rolling over upon the ground, and kicking up his heels in the most childish manner, while the stolid red-skins did not affect to pay the least attention to the words uttered.

Another object—if, in fact, it was not the principal one—kept this party in the Mohawk valley. St. Leger had received information, the previous day, that two officers of Colonel Gansevoort had escaped from the fort during the night, had succeeded in eluding his own sentinels, and were at that moment on their way down the Mohawk, in quest of reinforcements and supplies. In his extreme anxiety to intercept these messengers, he dispatched Captain Butler and the Indians, with orders to remain in the valley of the Mohawk as long as there was the remotest possibility of capturing them.

Accordingly, the Tory's first encampment was along that river, and on this pleasant spring morning he still lingered, as if loth to leave it. While the Indians were indulging their pipes, their leader, as usual, had read the proclamation

with as much gusto as if it were the riot act which their proceedings had called forth. He had been greeted with the usual outburst of applause from Honyost, and the same silent indifference at the hands of the Indians.

"Yes, I think that'll be a bomb-shell in their camp," remarked Butler. "If these bullet-heads here only understood king's English, they would appreciate it, for I must say the Colonel can issue proclamations as well as he can fight rebels."

"That am a fact—yas, sir," added Honyost. "But, if we raise sich a breeze down in the valley as we're expectin' to raise, mightn't we find it convenient to make ourselves skarce? Eh, Captain?"

The Tory growled an indistinct answer, when an exclamation from one of the Mohawks attracted his attention.

"What's up now," he demanded, gruffly. "Hello!"

Looking up, he saw that something on the opposite side of the river had attracted the red-skin's attention. The party were so situated that an unobstructed view across the stream was afforded them. Both banks sloping upward, they also were given a clear prospect for some distance on the other side. Not an inconsiderable portion of the land had been cleared, although the dwellings of the settlers were distinguished only at long intervals, and then, perhaps, in proximity to some bristling and formidable block-house.

Parallel with, and some two or three hundred yards from, the Mohawk, ran a wagon road, then the highway between Central New York and Albany. During the existing war, this road was rarely traveled, excepting by pedestrians. Good cause for astonishment, therefore, was given the party when it descried, directly opposite, a covered carriage, drawn by a span of horses, that were trotting along at a leisurely gait.

"That's cool," muttered Butler, after watching the vehicle a few moments. "Some rich old farmers, likely enough, and then again, *maybe it ain't*," he added, in a significant tone.

The Indians at once manifested an eagerness to cross and attack the unsuspecting travelers, but Butler commanded them to wait.

"Wait till I hail 'em," said he, giving, at the same time, a

stenorian shout, that was echoed among the hills, far beyond the carriage. This was repeated several times with no success, when, enraged at what he considered to be a defiant disregard of his summons, the Tory caught up his rifle and discharged it at the carriage.

The report evidently reached the ears of those within, for the horses were reined up, and the heads of two persons were seen gazing around, as if to ascertain the cause of the report. Butler hallooed several times, and ordered them to come down to the edge of the river and report themselves. The sight of several armed Indians surveying them filled the inmates with alarm, for, drawing their heads within again, they instantly struck their horses into a rapid gallop.

"Three of you cross the river and tomahawk every one of 'em!" commanded Butler. "They're a lot of rebels, and I'll teach 'em manners."

Three of the Mohawks instantly sprang down the river-bank, to where a canoe lay, and struck into the stream. In the mean time, the carriage was going at a furious rate, as if its occupants were thoroughly alarmed at the dreadful danger which menaced them.

"I'll swear there's a woman in there," muttered the Tory, exultingly, as he saw the carriage sway from side to side, in its rapid progress over the uneven road. The crack of the whip and shouts of the driver were plainly audible in the still morning air.

"What makes you think so?" queried Honyost, who, with hands buried deep in his pockets, was grinning at the exciting aspect affairs were beginning to wear.

I saw a scarf flutter just now. If there wan't any but men in there, they'd unhitch the hosses and leave that lumbering concern. The poor fools will stick to the road till every one of 'em is done for."

Near the center of the river was an island, about fifty yards in length and fifteen or twenty in width, covered with vegetation. At the moment of starting, the upper portion of this was directly in the way of the Indians. To expedite their progress, they aimed their canoe so as to pass around the lower end of the island, when a clear passage was afforded them of crossing the stream.

The light bark shot downward like an arrow, each of the three Indians possessing a paddle, and using it with all the skill and strength at his command. They kept their eyes upon the carriage, which was pitching and swaying beneath the frenzied effort of the horses, and the terror-stricken urging of the inmates.

The canoe was just disappearing around the lower edge of the island, and was skimming like a swallow over the surface, when a shrill signal from Butler caught the ear of the Indians. The foremost looked back, and saw the Tory running down-stream and making the most frantic gestures to attract their attention. A moment later the boat had shot out so far in the river that it was visible over the lower portion of the island, and the savages then saw Captain Butler's furious gesticulations. Running at the top of his speed, he was shouting and waving his hands.

At a signal from the leading Indian the canoe was checked when it was evident that something coming down the river had caused his excitement. The savage rose to his feet and looked up-stream. Instantly he dropped to his seat again, and, with a vigorous motion of his oar, sent the canoe directly back beneath the shelter of the island. A new and startling discovery had placed the frightened inmates of the carriage for a moment beyond all danger of pursuit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHASE.

THE object which so affected Butler, and which caused the sudden return of the Indians behind the shelter of the island, was a second canoe that had just come to view around a bend in the Mohawk.

Within the boat were two men, one of whom was using his paddle quite vigorously, while the other kept a bright look-out upon both shores, as if expecting danger. That these two were the messengers who had left the fort was

evident to the Tory, and hence his anxiety that the red-skins should give over their scheme of revenge for the present, and attend to this more important case. The savages comprehended what was required, and, withdrawing behind the island, awaited the approach of their prey.

The anxiety of Butler to check the Indians, led him into such extravagant demonstrations, that the officers in the canoe discovered him, and instantly took the alarm. He who was using the paddle—and who was a Colonel in the army—, instantly ceased his efforts, and surveyed the shore with the keen, scrutinizing gaze of a hunter.

On the right bank he discerned the carriage plunging forward at such a terrific rate as to show that it was from some unusual cause; and when he cast his eye to the left he caught a glimpse of the Tory as he dropped to the earth, as if to conceal himself. At the same moment, a pair of ostrich-like legs were seen to beat the air, as Honyost Schuyler scrambled away in quest of some hiding-place.

The Colonel addressed his brother officer in low tones:

"There is something wrong there," said he. "I believe St. Leger suspects we are on the way down the Mohawk, and has sent out a party to intercept us."

"I am afraid of running into a trap, Colonel. I don't like the looks of that island in the middle of the river, and it strikes me that those horses drawing that carriage are acting in a strange manner."

"I noticed that, a moment ago. It may be the animals are running away, but the driver has seen something to frighten him. There's somebody on the bank there, for we both saw him drop to the ground. Lieutenant, I would take my oath that that scallawag, Honyost Schuyler, pitched a summerset near by him,"

At any rate, both officers were tolerably certain enemies were in the vicinity, and that great circumspection was necessary in their movements. The Mohawk, owing to a recent rain, was quite high, so that the canoe was carried forward with considerable rapidity. Occasionally dipping his paddle, the Colonel checked its motion, while they earnestly conversed together.

It was finally agreed that they should make for the southern

shore, thus avoiding the northern bank, where had been detected the suspicious signs, giving, at the same time, as wide a berth as possible to the island, which was viewed with considerable apprehension.

With a dip of the paddle, the officer shot his canoe under the bank, where, the current being less rapid, its downward course was much abated. He was hardly abreast of the upper portion of the island, when a puff of smoke issued from the spot where they had seen the white man fall, and a bullet, whistled harmlessly over their heads, and was buried in the bank above them.

The shot was fired by Butler, and in return he received one which passed in uncomfortable proximity to him. Hon-yost Schuyler, thinking that it devolved upon him to do something, now rose to his feet, discharged his piece, and shouted :

"You hain't hurt nobody, and them Injins ahind the island will l'arn you better than to shoot at gentlemen like us."

These words were heard and not unheeded by the officers. He who held the paddle ran the canoe still closer to the shore uttering, at the same time, a low warning to his companion. He continued dallying in the water, retarding the motion of the boat, until, at times, it scarcely moved, and acting as though he were loth and fearful of descending any further down-stream.

During these movements he kept his keen gaze riveted upon the lower point of the island. He had already ascertained that there was no hiding-place for a boat on the side nearest him, and that, consequently, his foes must be concealed behind the isle, and must issue from its lower point.

The suspicion of the officer resolved itself into a certainty when he saw some three or four inches of the stern of a canoe glide backward out of sight, as though its inmates had suddenly become aware that it was exposed to observation, and were anxious to prevent a discovery. The moment he observed this, the soldier changed his tactics.

He made directly toward the island, as if he were about to land. As he did so, a desperate gesticulation from Butler (who did not seek longer to conceal himself) did not escape his eye. At the same moment the dip of a paddle was heard,

so that by this time the two were pretty well satisfied of the character of the danger which threatened them.

The dallying of Colonel Gansevoort's messengers had been for the twofold purpose of allowing themselves to reload their rifles, and to afford, at the same time, an opportunity, as it were, to "feel" their foes. Both these objects had been accomplished, and they were now ready for the trial before them.

The oarsman toyed with the paddle, as if undecided upon his plan of action. As he neared the island, he had half resolved to attempt a *coup d'état*, by suddenly landing and crossing to the opposite shore, and there attacking his foes at once. But prudence restrained him. He was uncertain of their number, while they were probably expecting him to land, and were prepared for any demonstration he might make. The actions of his foes, at the same time, were such as to prove that their anxiety was to take the two messengers prisoners, rather than to kill them. Consequently, their own personal safety was not in such imminent peril as it otherwise would have been.

"Hold your rifle ready!" whispered the Colonel, dipping his paddle deep into the current, and sending the canoe forward with such celerity that in an instant it was far below the island.

The course of the canoe was so impetuous and unexpected to the Mohawks lurking behind the island, that it was allowed to gain no inconsiderable distance before they attempted pursuit. Then, as they saw it hastening rapidly down, they uttered an exultant whoop and shot after it.

The American seated in the stern of the canoe raised his rifle and pointed it at the foremost Indian, who instantly dropped his head to dodge the expected bullet. The gun, however, was not fired. The messengers believed that these red-skins had been sent out by St. Ledger to capture them; and feeling by no means confident of their own ability to escape, they were anxious not to stir up their fury by slaying one of their number. It was therefore agreed that the rifle should not be resorted to, except at the last moment. In case they fell into the hands of the red-skins, after slaying one of their number, they well knew the fate that awaited them.

The chase had not progressed a hundred yards, when it became manifest that it was a most uneven one. Skilled as was the American Colonel in the use of the paddle and canoe, he was no match for his opponents. Two of them held paddles, which they used with such effect, that they gained rapidly and surely upon the fugitives. The latter could only resort to stratagem to keep them at bay.

When the proximity of the Mohawks became uncomfortable, one of the Americans raised his rifle again and pointed it at them. This caused a dodging and commotion, which, for the time, placed paddling out of the question. The moment was improved by the Colonel so effectually, that he recovered several of the rods which he had just lost.

Finding that the formidable instrument was not discharged, the Indians once more resorted to the paddles. The Lieutenant had lowered his piece, and made as if to examine the priming, so as to make sure that there would be no "flash in the pan." Apparently satisfied of its certainty, he once more raised it, causing as great a consternation as before, and then lowered it again without pulling the trigger.

The Indians by this time understood the ruse which was being practised upon them, and evidenced less fear of being shot, still, as they could not feel assured that the piece would not be discharged, it operated in a degree to retard their own progress sufficiently to afford the fugitives a chance of escape.

All this time, Butler, with his savage companions, and Honyost Schuyler, was keeping pace with the pursuers, the former and latter loading and firing their pieces continually, while the ungainly Tory kept up a shouting and yelling that would have done honor to a troop of Mohawks. These shots falling around the fugitives, sometimes startlingly close, rendered their situation uncomfortable, not to say critical.

At length, provoked beyond endurance, the Colonel caught up his gun, and taking quick aim at the dancing Honyost, fired. The leaping and yelling of the half-witted fellow now became so furiously grotesque and ridiculous, that both laughed outright.

"I believe the man is crazy," remarked the Colonel, proceeding to reload his piece. "See him jump and hear him yell!"

"Never mind him," replied the Lieutenant, "we have got our hands full to attend to these behind us."

While the officer was reloading, the pursuing Indians resorted to their paddles with such effect, that they swiftly approached within a hundred yards. The Lieutenant instantly raised his rifle, this time resolved to fire. The savages apparently divining his intention, again dropped their oars, and the soldier checked himself at the very second his finger was pressing the trigger.

This species of warfare could not continue long, and it was terminated sooner than either party anticipated. Like the renowned Captain John Smith, the fugitives paid more attention to their pursuers than to their own cause, and while the Colonel was occupied in reloading his piece, the canoe was drifting aimlessly downward. Unconsciously to themselves, it was carried nearer the shore by the current, until all at once, it ran upon a shallow projecting point of sand.

The instant this mishap occurred, the Lieutenant sprung out to get the canoe afloat again.

"Hold on! Don't do that!" commenced the Colonel. "Keep those fellows covered with your gun a minute."

It will be noticed that the Indians, in pursuing the messengers, was compelled to seat themselves in such a manner in the narrow canoe, that in case the Lieutenant really fired, as he frequently threatened to do, he had the whole three in range, and at such disadvantage, that were he disposed, he could soon terminate this phase of the contest. It is questionable, indeed, whether the fugitives gained any thing by their singular leniency. Their only imminent danger was from these very three, whom, as we have just shown, could be easily disposed of; but they believed there were a large number of red-skins along the opposite bank, and they were fearful of exciting their malignant vengeance.

Both officers, as they sprung upon land ran up the bank, and darted at the top of their speed down the river shore. The Mohawks, now confident of their speedy capture, immediately sheered their own canoe into shore, and plunged after in full pursuit.

Along the river for many miles ran a belt of timber and undergrowth, in some places twenty or thirty yards in width,

and at other: so narrow, that a rabbit could not have found a hiding place in it. It was into this that the messengers of Colonel Gansevoort hurried, and upon which they depended for their safety and ultimate escape from the pursuing savages.

CHAPTER V.

A RUSE AND ITS RESULTS.

ABOUT this time, Captain Butler began to make himself heard, and his voice, united with that of Honyost Schuyler, made a bullabaloo which could not fail to attract the notice of every living being within an extent of a mile. His desire was to be taken across the river, in order that he and his companions might participate in the pursuit.

His cries, however, although they reached the ear of the savages were disregarded; discovering which, he ordered Thugwan to swim over and bring back a boat. The malignant red-skin, whose whole vindictive nature was aroused, obeyed him instantly. He felt an uncontrollable thirsting to twist the hair of some helpless white in his muscular fingers, and it seemed to him that his knife was getting rusty for the want of blood.

The Mohawk usually is quite a shallow stream, and though it was somewhat higher from the recent rain, the Cayuga found it necessary to swim hardly half the distance. While yet several rods from the boats, he arose to his feet and walked. He selected the boat which had been used by his comrades, and with paddle in hand, shot swiftly back toward the shore he had just left.

The canoe was found insufficient to contain the five human beings who were anxious to cross. Two of the Indians therefore, to whom it was an indifferent matter, quietly swam beside the boat, while the Cayuga guided Butler and Honyost to the opposite side.

When the latter party landed, they saw nothing of their companions. A signal revealed that they were fully a quarter

mile down stream, from which Butler judged that the fugitives had resorted to direct flight to effect their escape.

A pursuit of half an hour, after the three savages took to the woods, failed to discover the fugitives, and the idea began to work its way through their heads that they were acting in an exceedingly foolish manner. All these had been running at a speed that must have carried them *beyond* the messengers, and the latter improved every second to its utmost in fleeing.

It was, therefore, morally certain that either the fugitives had not run at all, or that they had gone but a short distance, before allowing their pursuers to pass. Consequently, nothing was left the latter but to retrace their steps and make a search of the timber.

To accomplish the search successfully, one of the savages hastened back and met Butler and the others. It was then arranged that the latter should enter the wood at the point opposite where the canoe lay and proceed down stream, while the three should begin their search far above. The two parties would then advance toward each other, examining the timber so thoroughly, that there would not be the most remote possibility of passing their prey.

It required but a moment to arrange this plan. Two savages kept upon the upper margin of the wood, so that in case the fugitives attempted to leave it they could not escape discovery, while two walked in the edge of the river, their duty being to see that the messengers did not resort to the water.

Butler illy concealed his fury at this failure to take the messengers. If they escaped to Albany, he well knew the results would most probably be the raising of the siege of Fort Schuyler. He was anxious to take them prisoners, in order that St. Leger might prove to the fort that their hope of securing relief had failed. A mere announcement to the besieged Americans that the two officers had been captured would not be believed, while, if they saw them prisoners in St. Ledger's hands, there was hope that the discouragement might induce them to surrender.

Relying upon the apparent certainty of securing them, Butler was fearful that the golden opportunity had slipped, and they would get away after all. Hence his chagrin that

they had not been shot when the chance was given, and hence the determined perseverance with which the search was commenced.

The Tory himself did not make any exertions to examine the wood, for the blood-hound-like skill of the red-skins made it unnecessary. Especially Thugway, the Cayuga, could scarcely fail to detect the least leaf that had been overturned or the smallest branch that had been thrust aside. When a half dozen such beings as these were all occupied in searching for the messengers, there was certainly no need for any effort upon his part.

The Mohawk, whose duty it was to keep along the upper margin of the timber, had progressed somewhat over a hundred yards, when he struck a trail that, experienced as he was, puzzled him. He was about to summon one of his companions to assist him in decyphering the hieroglyphic, when he discovered that it was the track of an affrighted pig which had run across the road. The Indian was by no means satisfied with this solution of the matter. An adept as he was in all kinds of trickery, he more than half suspected some ruse had been played at this point, by which the American officer had succeeded in getting away. The assumption of the character of a pig was by no means an unusual stratagem; but under the present circumstances, he could not understand in what manner it could have availed the whites.

While still speculating on the track, a discovery had been made by one of his comrades that bid fair to be of more importance in its character and results.

Thugwan, the Cayuga, had joined the savages who commenced the search at the point above. Proceeding somewhat in advance of the two, he had maintained a position near the middle of the timber, his keen eyes taking in every object as he advanced with such certainty, as to make it evident that the search of those following behind would be unrewarded, however thorough it might be.

He had gone over three-fourths of the distance without making a single discovery upon which to hang a suspicion, when he reached a large branching oak, whose abraded bark and disturbed base at once caught his attention. The snakish

eyes of the Cayuga gleamed with exultation, as he saw unmistakably that some person had recently ascended it.

It was not necessary for the Indian to make a close examination of the trunk to ascertain this important fact; he learned it while a score of feet away, and studiously maintained the distance, in order that any one concealed and watching in the branches above might not suspect this discovery of his hiding place.

Taking a position just beyond the shade of the tree, he commenced a circuit around it, looking upward and examining the thick branches at every point where it was probable a person might conceal himself. There were places which even the eye of the Cayuga could not penetrate, which he reserved for a closer search in case the present failed to reveal any thing.

It was not until he had twice passed completely around the tree, that near the extremity of a large limb he made out a long, dark object, resembling a person stretched at full length upon it. The savage surveyed it fully a minute before he felt assured that there could be no mistake.

By testing several positions, he secured one where he gained a much better view of the man. The Indian pointed his rifle upward, as if about to discharge it, but it elicited no movement or response; and then, in low tones, but still sufficiently loud, he summoned the man in broken English to descend and surrender.

These commands were repeated several times, until Thugwan began to suspect that the man was really asleep and did not hear him. Two or three additional tests confirmed him in that belief and, with an exultant expression of countenance, he resorted to a species of tactics that could not fail to bring the matter to a speedy issue.

Taking a heavy stone in his hand he hurled it upward with unerring force and skill. It struck the limb directly beneath the waist of the man, giving him such a jar that he came tumbling down through the branches to the ground.

"Who kicked me out of bed? I was right in the middle of a dream when I got woke so sudden like. Haw! haw! haw! that you, Thugwan?"

It was Honoyost Schuyler who, exhausted and worn out,

had climbed into this tree to enjoy a few moments rest while the search was being prosecuted. He still rubbed his eyes and gazed about him, as if he had not fully recovered from his bewilderment.

"Ogu-oo-ah! what you do here?" demanded the Cayuga, y no means pleased at the dashing of his expectations to the round.

"I was steepin' when you woke me up. Haw! haw! hot that bed had long legs when I tumbled out of it, for I was a long time reachin' the floor!"

Had one of the Indians taken the pains at this juncture to look at the canoe which the messenger had left upon the point, he would have noticed that it acted in a singular manner.

In the first place, although lying upon the west side of the point, and in such a position that it would have been necessary to lift it by main strength to force it over, it still manifested a curious uneasiness. Tumbling and swaying from side to side for a moment, it slowly and deliberately glided up and out stream, until fully clear of the point, when it halted and resigned itself to the motion of the current.

Acting under this influence, it drifted rapidly downward, manifesting a curious tendency to reach the middle of the current until, when in the center, it gave over its erratic propensities, and acted in the same manner that a simple log would have done. As it glided past the wood where the pursuers were searching for the officers, an Indian standing in the very edge of the river, surveyed it with a wondering and doubtful look, he was on the point of arresting it, or of calling the attention of his comrades to what he had seen; but fearful of the ridicule which one of their number had already incurred, he forbore and resumed his search.

It was not until a half-hour later, when he called to mind the precise position occupied by the canoe, that the vague suspicion in his head assumed a certainty, and then it may be safely said that he shared it with none but himself.

While the fruitless search was going on, the canoe drifted noiselessly and swiftly down the Mohawk, until but a mere speck in the distance, and finally it disappeared around a sweeping bend. It was just at that moment that Thugwan

returned to where the remaining boat lay, and his eagle eye at once saw what had occurred. Hastening out to the point, he made a hurried examination of its marshy surface, and his suspicions were instantly confirmed.

He turned and gazed down stream, but there was nothing visible of the canoe, or of those whom he was confident had been instrumental in removing it. Baffled and indignant, he reascended the bank, joining Butler in one of his sullen moods, from which, for a time, it was impossible to arouse him.

When the two officers sprang ashore, instead of running down stream, as persons in their circumstances would naturally have done, they both turned, ran two or three hundred yards in different directions, and then dropped flat to the ground, where they were so effectually concealed, that they could distinctly hear the tramp of their pursuers, but could see nothing of them.

It was certainly strange, that not one of the six Indians should suspect that the fugitives had taken this canoe, until it was too late to prove of any avail. But such was the fortunate fact, which proved the salvation of Gansevoort's messengers.

Still in the center of the current, the canoe floated down stream; but shortly it began to approach the shore. It kept up its diagonal motion until within a few feet from the land, when it was suddenly checked. Then the forms of the two messengers arose from the water and looked each other in the face.

"Colonel, I believe we've give them the slip."

"I don't doubt it in the least; I think, too, we have given ourselves a good soaking also."

"It is hardly safe to build a fire, so we'll let our clothes dry upon us. We're in too much of a hurry to lose any time."

The two officers entered the canoe and hurried on to Albany. And that was the last that any of the Indians saw of Colonel Willet or Lieutenant Stockwell, for they reached their destination in safety, and the iron hearted General Arnold was dispatched to raise the siege of Fort Schuyler.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INVADED CASTLE.

THE carriage already referred to, was occupied by a Mr Gardner and his daughter Edith, who were proceeding to visit a relative ten miles below in the Mohawk valley. The former was a wealthy and aged widower, whose only child was the daughter. He was an uncompromising loyalist, and a resident of Cherry Valley. It had been their custom for a number of years, during the fine spring weather, to make this annual visit. The agitation along the border delayed this pleasure for some time, but as the relative was a brother of Mr. Gardner, who had the reputation of being as intense a loyalist as himself, the former hardly anticipated molestation when he set out upon his journey.

There was one fear, however, which at times caused him anxiety; it was that some marauding body of Indians might intercept him. These bands, when plunder was in question, made little, if any distinction between friends and enemies—robbing and murdering both indiscriminately. He was, therefore, filled with the most acute alarm on the morning in question, when he found himself hailed by Butler, and pursued by a number of Mohawks. His extreme terror prevented his recognizing the voice of the Tory, and even had he done so, it is a question whether he would not have been as anxious to avoid him, as he had received an intimation from his daughter of the state of feeling between him and herself.

He ordered the driver to put his horses to their utmost speed, and to pay no heed to any commands to halt or slacken his gait. The driver, whose fright, if possible, was still greater than his master's, at once lashed the animals into a full run, using his voice and whip to keep them at their tremendous speed.

As the lumbering vehicle swayed to and fro, in momentary danger of turning over, the fear of this catastrophe alarmed the father more than the pursuit of the Indians. He rose to his feet, steadying himself against the sides, and again and

again his heart rose to his mouth, and again and again he gave utterance to some half smothered exclamations, as the carriage made a fearful lurch. More than once, as his daughter was hurled against him, did he believe it was "all over" with both; but as the vehicle righted itself and plunged forward at its headlong rate, he breathed freer and hope received a spasmodic renewal, only to collapse as suddenly as before.

Tearing forward at this furious rate, the panic-stricken driver lost all presence of mind, and became more and more reckless each moment. The war-whoops of the Indians were constantly in his ears, and, as he glanced furtively behind him, he saw them in full pursuit.

All at once, Edith and her father saw the forward part of the carriage tip downward and remain in that position, while a trembling, grating noise told that something was wrong. Looking out, they observed for a moment one of the carriage wheels running beside them in the road.

Mr. Gardner called to his driver. He had hardly spoken when there was a sudden wrench, the fastenings of the horses broke, the man was thrown from his seat to the ground, and the animals sped down the road. Fortunately, the vehicle had come to a stand-still without turning over, and without injuring the driver, other than giving him a great fright.

"My heavens! what are we to do?" exclaimed the father, as he and his daughter came out from the carriage. "Robert, can't the horses be caught?"

"Gracious! no. They've been running away for the last half hour, and there's no stoppin' them now."

"But the Indians—where are they?"

All three had been gazing up the road while they were speaking, but saw nothing of the dreadful beings. As their view was fully three-fourths of a mile, they were somewhat encouraged by this.

"It is a long walk to uncle's," said Edith, "and what shall we do, father?"

"Walk it, walk it. My God! they will soon be after us."

The old man was still greatly excited, for he had felt more fear for the last half hour, than he had experienced for many years before. The three set out at once, Mr. Gardner, as

might have been expected, beginning with a gait that exhausted him in less than ten minutes. This necessitated a halt, so that their progress was very uncertain.

He took the arm of his daughter, who glanced constantly behind her. *She* entertained a suspicion of the identity of their pursuers, and had no desire to meet the arch Tory in this place, after the decided dismissal he had received at her hands.

During one of these rests, as she was straining her gaze up the wood, her ear caught a faint yell. She saw that it was not noticed by her father, and she warned the driver by a look, not to mention it.

"Dear father," said she, "are you rested?"

"Not yet. It comes hard for me to walk such a distance. I'm afraid we shan't be able to reach brother Jim's, unless we take a whole day for it."

"You know there are one or two houses this side, where we may stop. There's the top of a chimney now, right over the hill."

They were really within a few hundred yards of a house, at which they had frequently paused during their previous visits. As the strength of the old man was rapidly giving out, he expressed a desire to remain here, and the three resumed their journey.

They had scarcely done so, when Edith saw Robert, the driver, gaze up the road, and then give a start and turn pale.

"Yonder they come!"

"Who? the Indians?" queried the old man, as he paused and looked around. "Great Father! let us hurry!" he added frantically, as he saw that his servant had not been mistaken.

Great as was the tax upon the old man's strength, Edith, conscious of their great peril, assisted him forward at a more rapid gait. When on the brow of the hill, not more than a hundred yards distant from the door of their friend, the revengeful Indians were less than a quarter of a mile away.

With Robert shouting, so as to apprise the inmates of their approach, and half-carrying the feeble man, they hurried down the hill. Fortunately they were heard, and the door was opened before they reached it. Mr. Gardner gasped: "The

Indians are after us!" as it was closed and secured behind them.

The house was a large brick one, rather old and weather beaten, but in accordance with the fashion prevalent at the time of its construction, with heavy shutters, and walls of nearly two feet thickness. Within the building, at the time of their entrance, were a widow lady, a son who was a cripple, the well known Captain Eugene Heath, Buck Bailey, a celebrated scout, and Catfoot, an Oneida Indian. These being reinforced by the servant of Mr. Gardner, made a defensive force of considerable strength.

Captain Heath, who, in conjunction with Buck Bailey, had made several ineffectual attempts to enter Fort Schuyler, was now returning from a visit to Cherry Valley to repeat the effort. The widow lady, at whose house he stopped, had a second son in his command, and from the kindness which had been shown her darling boy, she regarded the Captain with a maternal affection. When any where in the neighborhood, he made her home his home; and, during the several weeks that had elapsed in passing backward and forward between the fort and the valley, both he and Buck Bailey had spent several nights with her. They had reached the place the preceding evening, and were shortly after followed by Catfoot, who had been on the trail for half the day. The hour as yet being comparatively early, and there being no occasion for undue haste, explained why they were still there, although at the very time the fugitives rushed into the door, they were preparing to leave.

Mr. Gardner fell fainting to the floor. A few words from Edith explained all to Captain Heath, and he gave orders instantly to secure all the doors and shutters. Several flew to obey him, while he, in company with the cripple, made their way to the second story to gain a sight of their foes as they approached.

The savages had already reached the house, and at the moment he looked out, Honyost Schuyler, shouting at the top of his voice came straddling over the hill. Right behind him was Butler, with rifle in hand, his face all ablaze with passion. As the Tory looked up to the building, he brought his rifle quick as lightning to his shoulder and fired. Captain

Heath was wondering what this meant, when he heard a groan by his side. Looking around, to his horror, he saw the son of the widow in the agonies of death upon the floor! He had been gazing out of a small window, and was shot in the face by Captain Butler himself. Immediately after, the Tory gave orders for the house to be broken into and the inmates brought out. Three savages leaped forward to obey the command, but they were suddenly checked by the foremost dropping dead in his tracks, killed by a bullet from the rifle of Catfoot.

There were three guns only in the house, those belonging to Captain Heath, Buck Bailey, and the Oneida. The presence of the others, therefore, was only an incumbrance, and the probabilities were that they would be a fatal one. Had these three been alone in the building, they would have bid the Indians welcome to the conflict; but, incumbered by the presence of the old man and two women, whose lives they were anxious to preserve, they had good occasion to be apprehensive of the result.

The building, being of bricks, could not be readily fired, but a burning arrow upon the roof, a pile of brush or a battering-ram at the windows and doors, would soon make an end of safety, and afford the impatient savages a speedy entrance into their midst.

Knowing the relations which existed between Butler and Mr. Gardner, Captain Heath determined to appeal to that in the first place. He was certain, from what had occurred, that the Tory had no suspicion of the identity of the fugitives; but, from what he had learned from Edith, he doubted, somewhat, the results of such a knowledge. He was vindictive, and might seize the present occasion for revenge.

In case the Tory made terms with those inside, Captain Heath understood further, the only reliance of himself and companions, under heaven, was upon their strong arms and brave hearts. The son of the widow had already been slain, and they were preparing for another assault upon the door. Captain Heath hurried to the lower room, where the terrified beings were huddled together.

"Mr. Gardner," said he, "do you know who is the leader of those Indians upon the outside?"

"No."

"He is Captain Butler, an old friend of yours."

"He doesn't know who we are?"

"Certainly not. He can have no suspicion of it."

"Then we are saved; for he would not harm a hair of the head of myself or daughter."

"I have been thinking that perhaps such is the case."

"Thinking that *perhaps* it is; why, most certainly it is," added the old man, regaining his usual manner. "But," he added, thoughtfully, "I don't know about you and your friends."

"I do," replied the Captain, with a smile.

"How? What is it?"

"We meet Captain Butler and his followers, at all times and places, as deadly enemies. My anxiety is upon your account—for Edith and Mrs. Gaskill here. If we can secure your safety, we will attend to ourselves."

"Did I not tell you that you need trouble yourself no further? What danger threatens us? We are safe—we and our kind host."

Captain Heath had not the heart to tell the poor woman that her crippled son lay stretched in death just above their heads. He would wait until a more convenient season before revealing a fact that could but set her wild with grief.

While the company were collected together, the door received a tremendous thrust, that well-nigh carried it off its hinges. "Come with me," said Captain Heath, hurriedly, to Mr. Gardner, and the two hastened above. "Be careful not to let him hear of our presence," added the officer. "Make yourselves known, and ask that he let you be undisturbed."

The window of the upper story being furnished with no shutters, Mr. Gardner simply raised it, and made himself seen. The rifle of Butler was at his shoulder when he discovered his identity. He instantly lowered it, and waited for him to speak.

"Captain Butler!" he called.

"Well, I'm here," replied the Tory.

"What does this mean?"

"What does what mean?"

"This pursuit of myself and daughter by you and these Indians?"

"Why didn't you stop when I commanded you to?"

"What right had you to stop us upon the highway? Besides, I did not know it was you who hailed us."

"Well, I didn't know it was you, either; but, you see these red-skins wanted a little fun, and I wasn't disposed to hinder them."

"Haw! haw! haw! that am so!" added Honyost Schuyler. "They wanted some fun, and am gittin' it, I'm thinkin'."

"I must ask you, now that I have made myself known," pursued Mr. Gardner, "that you go away and let us alone."

"I don't know about that, squire, replied the Tory, with the most offensive impudence. "You see, these fellows have been running till they're pretty tired, and they've a notion to rest awhile in this house."

"And are you going to allow it?"

"Well, I don't see as there's any objection. They won't harm things. One of you has just shot a poor Indian. I don't s'pose it's you?"

"No; I have no gun with me."

"Well, let us see the chap who fired that, and we will make the matter right. You needn't be alarmed about yourself."

"You are determined, then, to enter the house?"

"I guess, squire," replied the Tory, with a significant leer, "if you will go down stairs, you will find some of the red-skins have already come in by the back way!"

In the lower room were the Oneida, Edith, the coachman, and the widow, Mrs. Gaskill, who were anxiously listening to the words of the Tory outside. Catfoot had his position near the door which communicated with the cellar of the house, and was debating with himself whether or not to descend in quest of a place where he could better perform his duty, when the crisis came.

A moment previous to the startling announcement of Butler, Edith, in a whisper, inquired the meaning of a slight noise audible from the next room. Without pausing to think of the possible consequences, and with a natural womanish

curiosity, she instantly walked to the door communicating with the apartment, and opened it. As she did so, she saw three painted Indians, walking on tiptoe toward her. They had effected an entrance through the window, and were stealing in upon them at the moment of detection.

Edith uttered a piercing scream, and staggered back in sheer horror. The three savages strode quickly into the room. A fourth Indian appeared, and next the long, awkward form of Honyost Schuyler came shuffling into the apartment.

"Haw! haw! haw! How'r you? Ho! ho! ho! How's all the folks? You oughtn't to make a feller come in by the shutters when you've got so many doors in this concern—heigho! Mr. Gardner, how'r you?"

The latter at this moment appeared descending the stairs, his face fairly blazing with passion. As he entered, so also did Captain Butler.

"What is the meaning of this continued insult?" demanded the former in a voice loud and hoarse from anger.

"When you undertake to keep a man out of the door, he must come in at the window. How about that, Honyost?"

"Haw! haw! haw! that *am* so. Leastways, that's what we found."

As Mr. Gardner looked upon this man, whom he had employed for years as a servant, who had always been servile and cringing before him—as he observed his insulting familiarity, it seemed as though his wrath would consume him. Several times he was on the point of seizing a chair and bringing him to the floor. And Butler, who, for so many years had been a welcome visitor to his house—to see him adding insult to insult, was almost unendurable.

"Captain Butler," said he, "what cause have you for acting thus to my daughter and myself. What treatment have you received at my hands—"

"Shut up," interrupted the Tory, beginning to show choler himself; "we have had enough of this palaver. Your daughter seen fit to turn me away when I was last there, and now it's *my* turn to take charge of matters. I'm on my way to Cherry Valley, and can't stop here long; but I'm coming back this way, and you'll stay here till you see me again. I'm going

to leave some of these fellows as guards, and I needn't tell you they won't stand trifling. It'll be dangerous to undertake any tricks with *them*."

"Do what you please; I have nothing to say."

"It wouldn't make any difference if you had."

"I have a right to inquire what is to be done with us."

"You stay here, as I just told you, till we come back. If St. Leger isn't able to finish up the siege of Fort Schuyler pretty soon, there's no telling what will become of you; but if he does, p'raps you'll both go back to the Valley, and p'raps you won't. I'll give you some advice for your own good: you'd better take your gai and go into one of the upper rooms, for these Injins might take a hold of you, and I always make it a point to let 'em do what they please. That was the idea at Oriskany."

"But what of this old lady, our coachman, and the widow's son, who is a cripple?"

"I guess he's done for any way, for I popped somebody in the face when he poked his head from the window up stairs—not the room you was in."

The face of the listening mother blanched, and her heart sickened, for she understood the meaning of the Tory's words. She fairly flew up stairs in her torturing agony. A moment after a fall upon the floor was heard, as she dropped beside her lifeless son, and gave utterance to her piercing grief. Her agonizing wails would have moved the heart of a stone. She rocked to and fro, kissing again and again the cold lips of her poor crippled child, calling him by name, and wiping away the clotted blood from his cold, pale face.

As her low, tremulous wails reached the ears below, a stillness came upon all for a moment—but it was only for a moment. Butler burst into a coarse, brutal laugh.

"The old woman takes it kind of hard; but hang it, I'm getting tired of her noise. Thugwan, you go up and tell her to keep her mouth shut, and if she don't mind you, why you shut it for her."

The scowling Cayuga hastened to obey, for his heart delighted at the thought of shedding blood. He went to the room quietly, and, suddenly appearing before the mother, commanded her to stop; but, in her great agony, she neither

saw nor heard him, and his commands were unheeded. The red-skin was only too prompt in obeying his leader. Perhaps it was merciful that the spirit of the mother was allowed so soon to unite with that of her son!

It was not until now that Mr. Gardner and Edith realized what a being held them in his power. Both were too proud to sue for mercy, and yet both felt that they stood upon the brink of a fate as terrible as that of the widow and child who had perished but a few moments before.

"Howsumever," continued Butler, as though there had been an interruption to the conversation, "Before Honyost and myself go on to the valley, we'll give this old house a search. P'raps there's something in it we don't expect to find. A little liquor or food wouldn't come amiss just now. Mr. Gardner, you and Edith may step into this front room, and stay there till you are ordered to leave."

As the two turned to obey, Edith spoke in a matter-of-fact tone, "come, Robert!" The trembling servant hurriedly followed, but he was intercepted by Butler.

"You'll stay where you are."

The look of indignation that flashed from Edith's eyes, as she returned the glance of the Tory, was enough to disconcert an ordinary personage. As it was, the Briton carefully avoided her look, keeping his gaze fixed upon the inoffensive coachman.

Father and daughter arm-in-arm, walked slowly but scornfully by the Tory, into the apartment indicated. Butler watched them until the door was closed; then he motioned to the servant to follow from the house.

"See here," said he, in a whisper, the moment they were upon the outside. "These Indians that I have with me are pretty high old fellows."

The man looked stupidly at him, as if he failed to comprehend his meaning.

"They've had considerable practice in the scalping business."

"O, kind master, save me!" implored the driver, sinking upon his knees. "I will serve you all my life. Save me! oh, have mercy on me!"

Butler did not speak, but looked down with an expression of amused contempt at the wretch before him.

"Save me! save me! do not let them Indians kill me! I will do any thing in the world that I can to serve you! Do, do, do! Have mercy kind, good master."

"See here; if you want to save yourself, I will give you a chance!"

"The man instantly sprang to his feet, his face radiant with hope.

"The Indians haven't noticed that you were here, and I won't be hard for you to give 'em the slip. You're pretty good on running, I guess. So, you just streak it for the woods yonder, and as soon as you reach there hide yourself. Run as fast as you can."

"Shall I start now?"

"If you want to."

"O, thank you! good, kind man."

The driver struck off at once into a rapid run for the woods in question. They were a considerable distance away, and he exerted himself as only a poor fugitive can, who knows his life depends upon his heels. But the whole affair was one of the Tory's fiendish ruses. His only object was to afford himself a little amusement; for, had he not been certain the man could not possibly live to reach the concealment, he would never have allowed him to depart. So it proved. He had not run a hundred yards, when Thugwan and another savage started in pursuit. They could not have come up much more rapidly had the lumbering fugitive made no effort to escape at all. Five minutes later, the ghastly trophy from the head of the driver of Mr. Gardner hung at the wrist of Thugwan the Cayuga!

"Now you may search the house!" said Butler.

CHAPTER VII.

IN A TIGHT PLACE.

No doubt the reader, all this time, has been wondering how three armed men like Captain Heath, Buck Bailey, and Catfoot, the Oneida, allowed such proceeding as have just been recorded, quietly to go on, when about a half dozen only were the perpetrators.

The unexpected manner by which the savages entered the dwelling disconcerted all the plans that Captain Heath and Buck Bailey had arranged for its defense. As the door communicating with the room in which the Indian stood was opened by the widow, Catfoot caught a glimpse of their clothes and head-dress. It will be recollected that he was standing at the door which communicated with the cellar. Understanding his personal peril, he whisked into the cellar as quick as thought, where his further actions were to depend upon those of his enemies. A few moments convinced him that his presence was unsuspected, and then, like a caged criminal, he began to look about him, to ascertain his prospects.

Buck Bailey was standing beside Captain Heath when they both heard the savages below them.

"They've outwitted us; ha, ha, ha!" laughed the former, in an undertone. "What's the word, Captain? Shall we sail in?"

"Where's Catfoot?"

"He has hid away somewhere, for if he hadn't, there'd be more noise below than there is."

"That's bad, for if we all three could make a rush at them at the same time, we could do some execution; but they have caught us at a disadvantage."

"Never mind; we can keep the whole tribe from coming up these stairs. I wouldn't mind guaranteeing to do that much without your help."

"We can do it, easily enough, but what will it amount to, Buck? What would they like better than burning the house to get us? There's no disguising the matter. You know

what that Cayuga, Thugwan, and the Mohawks with him would give to get hold of Catfoot and you, and you know, too, that Butler would run his neck into the halter for the sake of taking me. We will fight to the death before we are taken, but we must manage to get out of this house to do the fighting—"

The scout suddenly raised his hand in a warning manner. Captain Heath checked his whispers and listened. Some one was ascending the stairs which communicated with a room that, in turn, was united by a door with the apartment in which they were standing. Without a word, the two moved stealthily away, and took such a position that no one could enter without passing directly between them. Had the tufted head of a savage, or the form of Honoyost Schuyler obtruded itself, a speedy and noiseless death would have been the inevitable result.

The next moment the touching lamentation of the widowed mother reached their ears, and the face of Buck Bailey, generally genial and pleasant, assumed an expression so dark and forbidding, that it was painful to look upon. It seemed as if eclipsed by a cloud of the most ferocious passion. But it lasted only a moment, although it by no means assumed its former appearance.

Shortly after, it will be recollected that Thugwan, the Cayuga, at the bidding of Butler, followed and despatched her. Strange as it may seem, neither Captain Heath nor Buck Bailey suspected what had been done until the Indian had descended, and was beyond their reach.

"My God, Captain, this is too much!" exclaimed the scout. "I feel as though I could tear to pieces every one of these demons."

"Don't get excited," admonished the officer, vainly endeavoring to conceal his own emotion. "How short-sighted to let him escape when he was within our clutches. But it is too late to rectify it for the present. Suppose, while I take a survey from the window, you ascend to the garret above, and find out what you can; then return to me, and we will decide what is to be done."

The suggestion of Captain Heath was immediately adopted by the scout, who, on tip-toe, made his way to the room above.

The first glance that he cast outside discovered an alarming and startling fact. Not more than a hundred yards from him were six strange Indians, who had evidently just arrived. Thugwan and Butler were engaged in talking with them, and but a short distance away was discernible the body of a white man, which the scout had no difficulty in deciding was that of Robert, the coachman of Mr. Gardner.

Buck Bailey descended at once, and communicated with Captain Heath.

"That places fighting for the present out of the question," said he. "Let us make efforts to conceal ourselves, and, as they do not feel *very* suspicious of any one's presence in the building, besides those they have already seen, we have a good opportunity of escaping."

"But, Captain, suppose they should pounce upon a chap! ha! ha! What'll he do? Call out they ain't playing fair, and make them go back while he hides himself over again?"

"If you are found, and need my help, just make the signal, and Catfoot, I have no doubt, will be with you as quick as myself."

"No fear of my making any signal, for if I get into a scrape, I think it will be enough without dragging you in also. There's no mistake, Cap, we're in a tight box; but I believe the good Lord has helped me out of as tight ones as this."

"You remain here while I make a short observation from yon stand-point," said Captain Heath, as he made his way into the garret. When he looked forth, he saw nothing at all, from which he concluded the Indians, spoken of by Buck Bailey, had already entered the building.

Satisfied of this, he turned to descend, but had taken but a step or two when he abruptly paused. Feet were ascending the lower stairs, and he knew that the search had begun!

Buck Bailey had not detected the danger until it was too late to attempt to warn Captain Heath. As he heard the feet ascending the stairs, he realized that but a moment remained for him to conceal himself. His first impulse was to hurry above and join his friend; but he checked himself. The garret offered no secure hiding-place, and the creaking stairs would be sure to discover him to the sharp ears of the Indians."

His next impulse was to hasten out of the room into another ; but his quick discernment told him that he could not better his situation by doing so. He therefore glanced hurriedly about him to see what could be done. His eye sparkled as it rested upon the fire-board behind him. Stepping softly across the room, he pulled it aside and ensconced himself behind it.

The hope of escaping by this performance would have been as absurd as that of the ostrich that hopes to elude its pursuer, by hiding its head behind a bush, while its body remains in full view. Buck Bailey knew well enough that no Indian would look into that room without examining the fire-board, and he, therefore, cast an anxious look above him.

The chimney was constructed of stones, which had been laid with such poor skill that numerous protuberances remained, upon which it was no difficult matter to preserve a footing, after once obtaining it. The fire-place having been used but comparatively a few times, there was not much soot to annoy and frustrate his attempts.

It cost the scout considerable effort ; but he succeeded in getting his body in a position where it could not be seen, unless the person seeking him should look up the chimney. About two feet above the opening of the fire-place he found a resting-place for his left foot, and a little above that, upon the opposite side, another for his other foot. Standing thus, he carefully listened.

The Indians were already upon the second floor ; but they had paused a moment to view the remains of the widow and son. Had they not done so, Buck Bailey would never have been given the opportunity to hide himself. They remained there but a short time, however, when three went to the garret above, while two entered the room which held the fire-place. The scout heard their tread and their voices. They were conversing in their native tongue, every word of which he understood.

"We have got but three scalps," said one ; "the Captain will not let the heads of the old man and the young girl be touched."

"There may be more within the house," replied the other ; "we have not examined every part. There may be papposes

or children that have been hid away. Their scalps are obtained easy, and must hang at our girdle."

"Thugwan, the Cayuga, has got those of the woman and the man that lies on the ground. He tried to run away. Ugh! agh! oogh! oogh! ugh!"

Here both savages indulged in loud, guttural laughter, as they pictured the panic-stricken man, fleeing for life, in the vain hope to escape his relentless enemies. These ebullitions having subsided, they continued their conversation. It seemed that one of these savages was a member of the party that had pursued the messengers of Colonel Gansevoort, while the other had arrived but a few minutes before—just soon enough to witness the death of the coachman. It was the former who now spoke.

"Two messengers from Fort Schuyler went down the river to Albany. We see them."

"But I see nothing of their scalps."

"When they were within our hands, they escaped, and will soon be in Albany, where they will get more men, and drive St. Leger away."

The Indian gave utterance to a lugubrious lament, as he called to mind the miscarriage of their attempt to capture the two messengers. It was evident that neither of them had much hope of finding any one in the building, and during the conversation they made no attempt to search it.

"We go to Cherry Valley," added the first speaker; "the Captain must be there to-morrow."

"What takes him there?"

"He carries a *big paper*. He reads it loud to every body that listens. The Big Butler made it, and it is going to get a good many men for him."

"The men are wanted, for the Yengese fight like braves."

"There can be none hid in this room unless behind that painted board."

The critical moment had come! The scout heard one of the Indians walk across the floor, and approach the fire-place.

He was compelled to insinuate his fingers between the upper edge of the board and the stones to pull it out, and lost some patience before it yielded.

"There is no one there," said the savage, throwing the

board back with such violence that the rebound caused it to fall upon the floor.

"*The Yengese may hide in the chimney above.*"

The heart of Buck Bailey gave a great throb as he heard this remark of the savage. He believed his enemies were aware all the time that he was concealed there, and had been trifling with his fear as a cat toys with a mouse before destroying it.

"We will then brown him where he is."

"No you won't, neither," thought Buck Bailey, growing desperate at his situation.

A second time one of the savages approached the fire-place. He merely replaced the board, without glancing up the chimney. The scout had been mistaken in believing they knew of his concealment. It was only a casual remark of the Indian, who little imagined in what close proximity he was to a foe whose scalp would have caused rejoicing through the lodges of the Six Nations.

In the meantime, the situation of Captain Heath was by no means the most comfortable in the world. His foot was already on the stairs, when he caught the sound of his enemies ascending, and instantly drew back again.

Not having calculated upon concealing himself in this portion of the house, he was disconcerted a second time by the action of the Indians. Glancing hurriedly around the room, he descried nothing but a mass of rubbish in one corner, consisting mostly of broken furniture and old clothes. The surest way of discovery would have been to hide beneath them.

Feeling that worst must come to worst, he took his position at the head of the stairs, with his rifle clubbed, and determined to brain the savages the instant their heads appeared. A momentary delay, however, in the lower story gave him opportunity for thought.

For the first time, Captain Heath's eye lit upon a trap-doo in the roof, of which he resolved at once to avail himself. It was situated near the end of the house, in close proximity to the large stone chimney; and, as he pressed upon it, it readily yielded, and he ascended to the roof.

Here he was in imminent danger of being seen by some

upon the outside of the building; but the least that could be said of the situation of every fugitive in that house was, that it was extremely perilous, and the officer certainly had taken the wisest course.

As he emerged upon the roof, its steepness came within a hair's breadth of precipitating him to the ground. With much difficulty he clambered to the opposite side, until at length he reached the chimney, where he managed to secure a precarious foothold.

A few moments later, three Indians came into the room which he had left, and looked around them. The first proceeding was to toss the rubbish hither and thither, then to upset an empty barrel that stood by. These failing to reveal any thing, they turned to descend, when, as might have been expected, the eye of one of the scamps caught sight of the trap-door.

"Wonder Yengese live on top of house!" said he, pointing to the aperture. "Go out dere in warm weather, and get much warm."

"If he does not live there, then he may hide there."

"I will go out on top of the house," added the first speaker.

A slight pressure threw the trap-door upward, so that it offered no obstruction to their progress; and, placing his two hands upon the sides, he made a powerful and most graceful leap out upon the roof. Old Indian as he was, he might have known better. Where Captain Heath had been able to save himself only by the greatest care, it may well be supposed what were the consequences of such a proceeding as this upon the part of the Mohawk.

The impetus given his body by his leap, carried him forward with a momentum that could not be overcome. A casual observer would have supposed that, in squatting upon the roof, and sliding swiftly downward, he was taking a voluntary ride, somewhat after the manner of a boy in going down hill upon his sled. But, if any thing ever was involuntary, it was that descent of the Mohawk. Turning over on his face, he clutched frantically at the shingles, hammering his toes downward with a force that nearly drove them through the shingles.

All was useless. The aborigine glided downward swiftly, slid off surely, and came to the ground tremendously. The shock that he received was never forgotten by the savage to his dying day.

The two remaining Indians, with their heads projecting from the trap-door, grinned audibly as their unfortunate companion disappeared from view, and they heard the dull thump as he struck the ground.

"Waum-to-warrah loves to play!" said one; "he is yet a boy."

"He loves to slide down hill. Waum-to-warrah is full of sport as when he was young. He makes the leap of the buffalo, but he falls again as if shot."

"Shall we not follow him?"

As the conversation of these two Indians was in no ways serious, neither of them made the attempt to go out upon the roof. They merely looked around them, drew in their heads, and descended to the lower part of the house. In fact, it may be said, that not one of the savages expected to find any person in the house beside those they had already seen; hence their search was not so minute as it otherwise would have been. Had they really suspected the presence of others, not one of them would have escaped discovery for an hour.

Captain Heath waited until certain he incurred no danger, when he re-entered through the trap-door, leaving it unclosed, as the Indians had done. Before venturing to descend, he took his position at the head of the stairs, and listened.

All was profoundly still, and he was about to descend and join Buck Bailey, when, for the third time, he heard feet ascending the lower stairs. Feeling pretty positive that they would not come into the room which he occupied, he did not move, only to prepare himself for a precipitate flight to the roof in case he miscalculated.

A moment later he detected the voice of Butler, and then a reply from Mr. Gardner, from which he inferred that the Tory was bringing his prisoners to the second story for the purpose of security. Shortly after, the boisterous laugh of Honyost Schuyler reached his ears, and he became fully satisfied that his first supposition was correct.

By this time, it was late in the afternoon. When darkness permitted, Captain Heath determined to effect his escape. From words which he had overheard, he was made aware of the intention of Butler, and he had strong hopes that he could benefit the two captives in his hands. It tried him sorely to be hiding in the building, when old age and defenceless womanhood demanded his services; but, for the present, it could not be otherwise. Once fairly beyond the house, where all his thoughts were not necessarily occupied in attending to his own safety, he could think and operate to some purpose.

Night at length slowly settled over the wood, field, and river—a night that, while quite dark, still had sufficient light in it, to render his undertaking full of danger. Once more he emerged from the trap-door and paused to look around him. No form was visible upon either side of the house.

Slowly and cautiously Captain Heath made his way along the peak of the roof, until he had reached the end farthest removed from the chimney. Then he felt his way toward the eaves. It required extreme care to avoid the catastrophe that befel the Indian, to prevent his hands and feet from making too much noise.

At the eaves, he succeeded in letting his body down upon the roof of a lower portion of the house, from which he was not afraid to spring to the ground. The roof of this proved to be more steeply shelving than the one he had just left, and in spite of his utmost efforts to prevent it, he could not save himself from sliding off.

The fall was but a few feet, and his only anxiety was, lest his precipitation might attract notice from some of the Indians. As he struck the ground, he lay upon his face and listened. He could hear the murmur of voices within, but could distinguish no words. Feeling pretty confident that his action was not noticed, he arose and walked rapidly away toward the wood, but had not gone a dozen steps, when he saw an Indian issue from the house and start toward him.

Had there been no others in the neighborhood, it is safe to say he would not have fled; but, as it was, he had every reason to get as far away from the house as possible. He started at the top of his speed, and the savage did the same, and what is more, gained very fast upon him.

Finding he must be shortly overtaken, Captain Heath wheeled suddenly around and raised his rifle.

"Ugh! Cap'n run much very fast!"

The officer lowered his gun, as he recognized the form and voice of Catfoot, the Oneida.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECONNOITER.

CATFOOT'S first thought after getting into the cellar, was to find a way to get out again. There were two windows in the stone wall, just above the surface of the ground. Across these were stretched parallel bars, which, upon examination, instead of wood, proved to be solid iron, and were as firmly imbedded in the stone, as if the cellar had been constructed for a criminal prison. The Oneida was somewhat taken aback at this, for he had counted upon an easy egress from the cellar. He was confident that he could in time make his way out, but he had not the time to spare. Events transpiring above, called for prompt action.

While the dusky savage was thus cogitating, he heard the shuffling of feet overhead, and the door communicating with the cellar opened. Quick as lightning, he darted back into a corner, where the light scarcely reached him, and waited for the approach of his foe.

In a moment, a pair of moccasined feet were visible, and these were quickly followed by the legs and body of a Mohawk. The heart of the Oneida leaped, as he saw there was but one enemy to encounter, and his hand sought the handle of his knife. There was no danger of his avoiding this foe.

From the action of the Mohawk, it was evident he was searching for other things than concealed fugitives. Pots and jars in great numbers were around him. He lifted the covers of several and peered in. As his eyes rested upon the dark mass of sweetmeats, he poked his finger downward, and then

drew it through his mouth. The sweet taste filled his soul with delight, and he instantly drew out several handfuls, and put them in his mouth, much after the manner of a thieving urchin. This he repeated to several other jars, until he had gormandized himself, when he deliberately turned over all the preserve jars, broke them, and dabbled his feet in the ticky mixture with the keenest enjoyment.

Still unconscious of the doom glaring out upon him from the hiding place in the dim corner, the savage continued groping hither and thither, coming nigher and nigher all the time, until he was almost in striking distance.

At the very moment the Oneida was on the point of making his noiseless leap, the Mohawk, in obedience most likely to a whim, sprang up the step and disappeared almost instantly. Fortunate, indeed, was he; for the Dark Angel was close to him in that moment.

The indiscriminate manner in which the savages were strolling over the house, gave Catfoot an idea which he was not long in carrying out. He felt pretty certain that if he should pass up the steps in his own easy, natural manner, his identity would not be suspected unless he should have a direct encounter with some one.

The hum of voices, and the noise of moving feet, proved to the Oneida that his enemies still were within the building. For the purpose of greater security, Catfoot deferred his project until complete darkness had come. At the moment that Captain Heath was cautiously making his way along the roof, the Oneida had decided to carry out the determination he had made some time before. His plan was simply to walk slowly with a "careless carefulness" up stairs, open the door and pass outside, where his course would depend upon circumstances.

His foot was upon the stairs, when the door above opened and some one commenced descending. At such a time, the cellar could be but involved in complete darkness; so that had he chose, Catfoot might have withdrawn and concealed himself; but he chose the more dangerous course, and encountered the stranger when he had about half descended. The latter appeared somewhat startled at the encounter. He drew back and addressed Catfoot, who made a suitable reply,

without pausing. Seemingly satisfied, the Indian continued his descent. The Oneida opened the door and passed into the room with which it communicated. It was enveloped in semi-darkness, but there was sufficient light for him to distinguish the forms of Butler and Thugwan, conversing together.

Catfoot manifested no trepidation, but walked toward the door, when the Tory called to him and inquired where he was going. He made an indefinite answer and passed out. Whether it was the intonation of his voice (which was quite different from any of the Mohawks) or whether the suspicions of Thugwan were aroused, he was uncertain. But he saw something was wrong, for he had not taken a dozen steps, when the door reopened behind him, and the Cayuga appeared. Could the Oneida have succeeded in leading him at a safe distance from the building, where there could be no interference between them, he would have been willing to lose a limb for the sake of such an encounter. But such was not to be the case, for the Cayuga almost instantly withdrew, and was seen no more.

As he started toward the woods, he caught sight of Captain Heath, whom he recognized at once, but did not dare to address him until he was further removed from the building. Then, as we have already shown, the Captain discovered the identity of his pursuer, and the two congratulated each other upon their successful escape.

"Where Buck?" inquired Catfoot.

"He is still in the house."

"Mohawk got him?"

"No; I think not."

"Who den, Butler?"

"I do not believe any one has him. He has hid himself somewhere, and I think he is safe for the present."

"Where you lebe him?"

Captain Heath explained the manner of their separation and of his own flight; after which, the Oneida expressed himself satisfied.

"What we do now?" he inquired.

"Do you know, Catfoot, what is pretty certain about Butler and those Indians with him? They will leave the building to-night."

"Where go to?"

"To Cherry Valley."

"What go dere for?" inquired the savage, in his quick, sententious manner.

"Butler has business there—exactly what it may be, I can not tell. He is in somewhat of a hurry to reach the valley and he will take most of the Indians with him. What do you think about it?"

"Junno nothin'—haint told me."

Captain Heath related a few words that Buck Bailey had overheard. The belief seemed to impress the Oneida, although he made no hasty admission to his companion. Being now far removed from the building, they decided to remain where they were for an hour or two, and then to approach the house to reconnoiter it, ascertaining, if possible, what the intentions of Butler really were.

"If Injin go way—Injin stay dere," remarked Catfoot, a few moments later.

"I suppose so; if those they leave behind are not more than half a dozen, we'll make short work with them."

"Maybe Thugwan be there," added the Oneida in a tone which portrayed the dearest wish of his heart.

"I hardly think so, as he and Butler seem inseparable. And indeed they are a well mated pair."

The time allotted wore slowly away. They kept their eyes fixed in the direction of the house, but saw nothing until they were about to start, when a bright, star like point of light suddenly flashed to view. The Oneida pointed to it.

"Butler dere—Injins, don't do it."

"I suppose he has struck a light. It may be old Mr. Gardner—Edith, who has done it."

"Maybe Buck," added Catfoot, in a voice that Captain Heath supposed was meant to refer to the jocose style the scout generally had of doing business,

"Hardly. He would not be desirous of incurring such a risk, especially when there can be no possible need of it. You feel certain, Catfoot, that none of the red-skins have struck the light?"

"Know as—whites do it."

"In that case, we will wait somewhat longer before we approach.

The light continued twinkling and glimmering like a star across the fields, as if to beckon on the two watchers. It was comparatively early in the night, when they started toward it. They had not gone half the distance, when they discovered that it was in the second story. This encouraged Captain Heath. He pressed forward with a more rapid step, until suddenly arrested by the hand of Catfoot.

"'Sh," he whispered. "See 'em?"

Straining his gaze into the darkness, Heath detected several dark bodies, not coming toward, but by them, following such a direction, that they would approach but a few feet closer.

This proximity failing to discover their number or identity either to Captain Heath or the Oneida, the latter dropped on his hands and "galloped" silently toward them. Both parties disappeared so rapidly, that the officer was at a loss to locate them. A few minutes later, however, Catfoot, erect and deliberate, made his appearance.

"Who were they?" inquired Captain Heath, in a hurried, eager tone.

"Mohawks."

"No one else?"

"Butler and Thugwan there—travel fast—in hurry—leave old man and gal behind."

The young officer could scarce conceal an exclamation of joy. He would have started on a run for the building, had he not been restrained by the deliberate Oneida.

"Too much hurry bad—Mohawk find out—kill gal and old man."

"How many have they left at the building?"

"Honyost dere—"

Captain Heath could not restrain a laugh.

"A poor fool, he will do no harm. If he is the sole guard, Buck Bailey has disposed of him by this time."

"Injin dere too—dunno how many."

At this moment, the outlines of the building became visible, and the two halted for a moment's conversation, then the Oneida moved forward to ascertain the precise situation of affairs.

CHAPTER IX.

BUCK BAILEY'S INTRODUCTION.

As the day crept slowly along, Buck Bailey began to grow uncomfortable in his sooty hiding place. It was no easy matter to stand hour after hour in his constrained position, and when finally he heard the two savages withdraw from the room, he crept cautiously out from the fire-place and stretched his limbs.

"Ha! ha!" he laughed. "It's lucky for me that it isn't cold to-day. If they had taken it upon themselves to build a fire, I might have got a good toasting!"

The good-natured scout was himself again, and laughed and joked with himself in his usual manner. This finished, he took upon himself to ascertain the doings and intentions of those below stairs. He could hear the passage of feet and the hum of voices, as did the Oneida, but was unable to catch any words. As a consequence, he remained entirely in the dark, regarding their movements until night, when he heard feet upon the stairs, and hastily scrambled back to his concealment.

He soon ascertained the comers to be Butler, Honyost Schuyler, Mr. Gardner, and Edith. The first said as he entered:

"You will stay here till you hear from me again. I am going to Cherry Valley to-night with most of my Indians, but will leave Thugwan and Honyost to take care of you."

"I am your guest, Captain Butler. Treat my daughter and myself as you please. You have perpetrated cold-blooded murder to-day. We are defenceless, and in your power—"

"What is the use of talking?" demanded the Tory, with an oath.

"No one intends to hurt you. You are loyal to King George, and that is sufficient to protect you."

"It *has not* protected us from insult and injury, at least. If I live, St. Leger and Colonel Butler shall hear of this."

"Bah!" exclaimed Butler, impatiently. "You might as

well stop your rigmarole. If I thought there was any danger of harm coming to me for that, *you would never report it!* Do you understand?" he asked, with a quiet significance.

The threat was fully understood, and Mr. Gardner knew it was no idle one. If the whim should take the man, he would not hesitate to imbrue his hands in the blood of both himself and daughter. The old man was therefore more guarded in his remarks. As for Edith, her scorn of Butler, effectually sealed her mouth. She would not look at him, answer a single question, or show by any word or sign that she was conscious of his presence. Butler could but see this haughty indifference, and it galled him sorely. He pointedly addressed her several times, and finally made several covert threats, but with no success, except to make himself feel smaller than ever in his own eye.

"What is to be the final disposal of us?" Mr. Gardner ventured to inquire.

"I'm going down in the valley to spread a proclamation of the Colonel's, and to raise a breeze generally in that neighborhood. In case all things go along nice-like, you can go back to your home in the same manner that you came; but, if the siege of Fort Schuyler is raised, all I have got to say is, look out for yourselves."

"Look out for ourselves?" repeated Mr. Gardner, in astonishment. "And why must we do that?"

"Oh! you needn't, if you don't want to. Injins are apt to be dangerous, you know, when they expect a lot of scalps, and don't get 'em. They're not partickler whose they take. Howsumever, I must be off. Remember not to undertake to run away, for there will be a red-skin down stairs with his eyes upon you, and Mr. Gardner, you know what a red-skin is at such times."

"I certainly know what one who pretends to be a white man is."

"Wal, good-by—good-by, Miss Edith. You will probably see me in a few days again."

With this parting salutation the Tory hurried down stairs. In a few moments, he returned with a light, bade them good-by a second time, and shortly after took his departure with most of his savage followers.

When assured that they were really gone, Edith dropped into a seat beside her father, and drew a deep sigh. As she looked up in his face, a droll thought came into her head, and she laughed in spite of herself.

"Father, you know some time ago you expressed a wish for me to marry a good loyalist, that is, if I ever married. How would Captain Butler suit you?"

"God forbid!" replied the parent, in horrified amazement.

"Well, he proposed for my hand that evening when he last called at our house. My refusal has brought this trouble upon him."

"Curse him!" exclaimed Mr. Gardner, bitterly; "who ever supposed he would treat his friends in this manner?"

"Which would you prefer for a son-in-law, Captain Butler, or Captain Heath?"

"Don't talk of it, daughter—don't talk of it."

"What do you think of Buck Bailey, the scout?"

"A thousand times preferable—a thousand times preferable."

"So think I, indeed—what's that?"

A singular noise was heard behind the fire-board, as if some person were dancing with might and main. Then a hearty but suppressed laugh reached their ears. The board was shoved aside, and the genial face of the scout appeared, all aglow with smiles and good humor.

"I'm really 'bliged, Miss Edith, for your good opinion of Buck Bailey, and I'm 'bliged to you, Mr. Gardner, also, for the same thing."

Both laughed, and the girl answered:

"You have been listening, Buck, I'm afraid."

"Couldn't help it. I was there fust, and you follered me 'stead of my follering you, I didn't think to stop my ears til' you got through talking."

"But let us find how matters stand," said Mr. Gardner, in a more serious tone. "Have you been concealed in that chimney all day? and do you know any thing of Captain Heath, or of the Oneida Indian who was with him? They were somewhere in the building at the time Butler entered it. I am anxious to hear what has become of them."

"I think they both managed to get out of the shop by some means or other. But depend on't, they're close at

hand, and it won't be many minutes before we'll hear something of them. That Catfoot is a sly dog, and I'll warrant he's counted every redskin and white that has left this building. He'll wait till they get a safe distance, and then he'll be in here in a twinkling. I'm thinking if there's an Injin down stairs on the watch, it won't be long before that same Injin will get himself into a scrimmage that he isn't thinking of."

"What do you mean?"

"If Catfoot isn't here in half an hour I shall go down and 'tend to him myself; 'cause he must be disposed of any ways."

"There must be more than one."

"Think not. If there is, they ain't together, so there'll be only one at a time. But that Cayuga, that they call 'Thugwan is equal to half a dozen. I'd hate to deprive Catfoot of the pleasure of a set-to with him, for they hate each other worse then brothers."

"But there is Honyost Schuyler."

Buck Bailey laughed so suddenly and loudly that he assumed at once a supernatural gravity, and listened to ascertain whethere there was any evidence of his having betrayed himself. The noise had probably reached the ears of some one below, for feet upon the stairs were almost immediately heard. The scout listened a moment, and then said, in an exultant whisper:

"That is Honyost, sure as I live! Don't speak of me, and we'll have some amusement on our own account."

Saying which he whisked behind the fire-board, and awaited the coming of Butler's satellite.

As Honyost Schuyler was about to confront the man who had so often occupied the place of master over him, and the woman who, while she had also held the same position, still wielded her power gently and indulgently, it must be conceded that he experienced peculiar feelings.

Their positions were now reversed, and he was to be guardian or jailor of them both. He whose proper position was that of a menial, and whose situation just now might be said to be that of a "fish out of water," was to assume the control of a man who had governed others while he was yet

unborn, and who seemed fitted by nature and birth to rule those beneath him.

As the awkward bumpkin straddled slowly up stairs, it cannot be denied but that he did an immense lot of thinking. In the first place, he knew Mr. Gardner to be one of the rankest sort of royalists, and why he should be held in durance vile was more than his simple soul could understand. He truly imagined that the daughter was some way mixed up in the affair, but the exact position she occupied he still failed to understand. He argued that he would not pursue such a course to win the affections of any lady for himself, and his ingenuous logic filled him with grave doubts as to the success of Captain Butler if he continued in this line of action.

However, these were but minor matters; and, think as he might, he had been given a duty which he dare not fail to perform. Butler, for whom he entertained as much terror as did thousands of rebels, at a later day, of another, but more noble Butler, had commanded him to assist the Cayuga in guarding the prisoners, until his return from Cherry Valley. This duty he was determined to perform, as long as his safety and life were in no danger.

When, therefore, he opened the door, it was with a countenance upon which no irresolution or timidity could be detected. With the air of master and dictator, he greeted the two with a sort of condescension, and then quietly took a seat beside them.

The horrors of the day, the gloom and doubt of the hour had so weighed upon the buoyant spirits of Edith, that she was silent and thoughtful, and felt no desire to enter into the festivity proposed by the scout. The father, on the contrary, was inclined to attempt any joke that could possibly punish the man. He, therefore, returned his salutation, and added:

"Are you all alone in the building, Honyost?"

"Thugwan is down stairs."

"Why did you have him?"

"I didn't ask for him. Cap'n Butler, I s'pose, thought it best to leave him. Didn't see what he wanted to leave him for, though."

"I suppose he saw that you were afraid to attempt to

guard us unless there was some one to share the danger with you."

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Honyost, boisterously. "Me afeard? Do you think there's anything that could skear me?"

"There's no need for thinking. We *know* you are a coward!"

"No, sir; there ain't nothin' that can make me wink."

"Don't you recollect the time when we had you at our house, that you imagined a bush to be a bear, and we could not hire you to go outside of the door until Edith went before you and carried the light? I think you will never forget that time."

"Haw! haw! haw! a little fun of mine. I was just plaguing the gal, that's all. I ain't the man to be frightened, I tell you agin."

"Suppose some one should attempt to rescue us?"

"Let him try it," vaunted Honyost, who did not fail to remember the serious obstacle he would encounter in the shape of Thugwan, the Cayuga, ere he could enter the building.

"Let him try it, I say, and you'd see where he would be."

"You intend, then, to keep us here until Butler returns from Cherry Valley?"

"Them's the orders he has left."

"And you acknowledge him to be your master in all things, don't you?"

"That's the idee, I believe; so, you see, you're fast till he comes back."

"Suppose Edith and I should undertake to leave the building, what then?"

"Don't try to do it, Mr. Gardner. You know I wouldn't like to hurt you or the gal; but if I should let you pass, that Cayuga would scalp you both as quick as flash. The dog likes to scrape the hair off your head so much, that if he don't get hold of some one afore long, I believe he'll try me."

"I fervently hope he will, and then take Butler next. But suppose that Catfoot should find out that we are here, and come to our assistance?"

"It's onpossible," replied Honyost, shaking his head; "it couldn't be did. That Cayuga has been looking for him for

over a year, and when he once gets sight of him, he'll rub him out like a chalk mark."

"It wouldn't be necessary for him to bother with the others, as you would attend to them?"

"Of course! I'm ready for all, big or little, short or tall if they don't come more than two at a time."

"Suppose Captain Heath should appear?"

"Haw! I'd fling him out the window afore he'd have time to sneeze?"

"Suppose it were Buck Bailey, the scout?"

"Haw! haw! *I'd smash him!* Hello—what's that noise in the chimney?"

"Perhaps some of the stones or mortar work falling down. So you would not be afraid of that scout?"

"Afraid of him!" repeated Honyost, with an expression of the most intense scorn. "I tell you *I'd smash him!* There *must* be something behind that fire-board."

"The speediest way to find that out is to go and look for yourself."

Honyost was about to refuse; but, recollecting the extravagant boasts he had just made, he rose up and strode resolutely toward the chimney.

He was about to reach out his hand to grasp it, when the board dropped, with a dull flap, to the floor, and there, crouched and glaring behind it, he saw Buck Bailey, the scout!

For a moment he was transfixed with amazement; then, as he showed unmistakable symptoms of retreating, the motionless scout, without once removing his eyes from him, in a voice like the muttering of thunder, uttered the single words:

"*Don't stir!*"

The stricken wretch did not stir. He did not heed the taunting laugh of both Mr. Gardner and Edith. It was not until Buck Bailey emerged from the chimney-place that he spoke. Then he reached out his hand, giving utterance at the same time to a boisterous laugh.

"How'd you do, Buck? Hang me if I ain't glad to see you. How'd *you* get in behind there?"

The genial scout strove to hold the unwonted expression of

fierceness upon his face ; but he could not. It would relax, and he laughed heartily, but not loudly, for he did not forget that he had a formidable enemy down stairs.

"I've been there all day, Honyost. Why didn't you come up before and see me?"

"Haw ! haw ! didn't know you was there, or I would jolly ! I'm glad to see you, Buck, no mistake."

"So am I to see you," and the scout, glancing at Mr. Gardner and Edith, laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. "But why are you so pleased to see me ? Be careful and not talk too loud."

"'Cause why," said the Tory, assuming a confidential whisper, "you see, Cap'n Butler has left me here to watch these folks, and I'm bound to help 'em off, and was trying to think how I could outwit that red-skin down stairs when you showed yourself. Wan't it good ? Haw ! haw ! Look out ; there comes Thugwan !" exclaimed Honyost, as he heard a step upon the stairs."

Buck Bailey listened, and knew at once that it was not the step of an Indian that he heard.

"It is Captain Heath himself," said he, in a hurried whisper. You must hide, Honyost, for he'll tear you to pieces if he sees you ! Into the chimney ; quick ! quick !"

Honyost, excited and frightened, danced up and down like a crazy person, and then shot in behind the fire-board, and just as it was replaced behind him, Captain Heath entered the room.

CHAPTER X.

THE SAVAGE CONTEST.

THUGWAN, the Cayuga, anticipating no enemies from the outside, remained within the building, where it would be impossible for one of its inmates to pass out without first attracting his attention. So confident was he of the utter futility of any effort to escape upon the part of the prisoners, that he lay down upon the floor, and folded his arms in sleep

The slumber of the American Indian is proverbially light. As he was not directly beneath Mr. Gardner's room, the noise made in their conversation and movements disturbed him but in a small degree. Not dreaming that any one beside Hon-yost Schuyler could be with them, and unable to note the words, or even the tones of the different speakers, he accustomed himself to the hum, and, in a comparatively short time became unconscious.

A sound, however, aroused the Cayuga. Unclosing his eyes, he lay, without moving a muscle, and bent all his faculties into that of attention. It required but a moment for him to discover that some one was at work upon the outside of the door.

Rising silently to his feet, he walked as quietly as the roused panther to the door and listened. It seemed to him that some one was simply pushing against it, without attempting anything else. Feeling certain that if it were an enemy acting in this manner, it was no one whom he need dread, he asked, in broken English :

"Who dere?"

The pressure instantly ceased, and he heard footsteps, as if some one was retreating.

A few moments later, the quick ear of the Indian detected precisely the same sound at the rear door. Whisking to this, he again listened. The entrance was secured by means of ponderous bars, but this did not prevent its yielding slightly to a comparatively small pressure. It seemed to him that a body was pressed regularly, but with small force, against the door, much in the same manner as might be expected from a dog or some other domestic animal.

As the voices above were still audible, it was certain they had nothing to do with it. Determined to understand this mystery, the Cayuga carefully let down the bars, and as carefully opened the door. The instant he drew it inward, he heard the same sound of retreating footsteps, and darted in pursuit. He caught a glimpse of a shadowy body, resembling that of a person, as it flitted rapidly before him. It eluded his grasp until a hundred yards or so from the house, when it suddenly turned, and he found himself face to face with an Indian !

"Who are you, and what do you want?" he demanded in Iniquois.

"I am Catfoot, the Oneida. I have come for the scalp of Thugwan, the Cayuga," replied his enemy in the same tongue.

At last the two enemies were face to face! They, who hated each other with an intensity of hatred which only the American savage can feel, who had sought each other for months; each of whom had vowed to take the scalp of the other or lose his own in the effort; these mortal enemies were now to meet in deadly encounter.

They confronted each other like tigers at bay. Each was exultant and confident. The prisoners might now quietly walk out of the house, and yet fail to draw away their guardian, the Cayuga, from the coveted combat, while nothing short of the death-cry of Buck Bailey himself would have drawn the black flashing orbs of the Oneida from the countenance of his opponent. The light afforded them was just sufficient for each distinctly to see the movements of the other.

The Cayuga was a most brutal and merciless savage. Like Butler himself he spared no age nor sex. He had dashed out the brains of many a prattling infant, and tomahawked a score of trembling paralytics. His name was notorious as one who gave no quarter to any, and who especially had outraged and slain many and many a maiden that had been placed in his power. He was a skilful and a very dangerous man. He bore a particular malice toward Catfoot. In the first place, they were both members of the Six Nations, and while the majority of these had followed the councils of the Johnsons and taken sides with the British, many others—among whom was this Oneida—had joined the Americans and fought nobly in their defense. Catfoot had become distinguished by the number of scalps he had taken from the Cayugas and Mohawks—a hundred of whom, as a matter of course, had vowed to take his own. A chivalrous Indian, who slew none except warriors, he, if possible, received their more deadly enmity on this very account.

The two combatants did not long remain idle. Drawing one foot backward, the Cayuga made a sudden spring at his

opponent, who anticipated the movement the instant it was made. Catfoot warded the blow at his breast and striking outward, with a success which was unexpected to himself, he buried his knite in the bosom of the Cayuga. The latter with a dismal howl dropped heavily to the earth, while the Oneida scalped him with amazing dexterity, and then exultingly flaunted the disgusting trophy in his face. Thugwan died stoically if not as a genuine hero. Not another word escaped him, nor did a muscle or movement show that he regarded the tantalizing action of his triumphant adversary.

Catfoot dangled the scalp again and again over his face, called him woman, boasted of his own prowess, and the number of Cayuga warriors he had slain, and of the vast number that was still destined to fall by his hand, heaped every imaginable insult and indignity upon him, and only ceased when he saw that the famous warrior of the Iroquois was dead.

The success of Catfoot, as we have stated, surprised himself. He had counted upon a long and deadly hand-to-hand conflict with his enemy, in which he expected to receive many severe cuts and wounds, and in which it was not improbable that he would be placed *hors du combat* for a season. When, therefore, Thugwan fell mortally wounded at the first blow, he was exultant beyond measure. The blow, in fact, was one of those fortunate accidents for the victor, that sometimes occur in such encounters, and was not due to the superior prowess of the Oneida himself.

Catfoot had made Captain Heath promise not to approach them, during the combat, even if he should judge that his enemy were worsting him, as he had concluded that the matter should be decided between themselves alone. Like a true savage, he had no desire for life if his enemy should triumph over him.

In reconnoitering the building, he discovered that some one was acting as a sentinel in the lower story; and, knowing that it was necessary to dispose of him, before he could hope to rescue the prisoners, and not wishing to alarm them, by bringing on the conflict in the building, he resorted to the means we have noted for drawing his enemy beyond the house. It was not until Thugwan addressed him, that he discovered his identity, when, as we have seen, the combat

at once assumed the character of a struggle for a long-sought prize which was now within reach of his hand.

Captain Heath stood close by the building, an agitated and apprehensive listener to the conflict. Its brevity surprised and alarmed him; and when he discerned through the gloom a single Indian coming toward him, he was in doubt what course to pursue. He was soon relieved, by the voice of Catfoot.

"Me got him! Dat Thugwan's scalp," said he, holding up the trophy before him as he approached.

"Why, it took you but a short time to do it. You must have fought well."

Catfoot, usually so stolid and indifferent, could not, for the moment, conceal his gratification at the success which had crowned his trial of prowess with his noted adversary. He continued dangling and sporting with it, and remarking upon his achievement for several minutes. Captain Heath waited until the flush of his triumph was over, and then said:

"Suppose you go above and join our friends?"

"Me stay here and watch, you go up. May be Injin come back."

"Do you think there is danger of any of them returning?"

"Dunno—mebbe so—guess not."

With this assurance Captain Heath entered the house and ascended the stairs, at the moment that Honyost Schuyler slid behind the fire-board.

CHAPTER XI.

THE JOKE AND THE CASTLE DESERTED.

CAPTAIN HEATH entered the room in which sat Mr. Gardner and Edith, and where stood Buck Bailey. The former greeted him more kindly than he ever before had done.

"I am sorry you have been so unfortunate," said the Captain, in a tone of respectful sympathy. "I thought Captain Butler stood upon good terms with you."

"So has he stood, but his course has been nothing but an

outrage. At the earliest opportunity I shall inform St. Leger of this, and he will see that he is properly punished."

"He certainly forgot himself to act thus in the presence of your daughter—"

"Oh! the infernal villain!" exclaimed Mr. Gardner, losing all patience. "There ain't a greater scoundrel in the provinces than he. If the safety of our cause must be placed in such hands as his, it deserves to fail!"

Captain Heath could not forbear a sly look at Edith, as these words were uttered, and she, in turn, half smiled; never before had she heard such a concession from her parent.

"Yes, they seem to fail!" he added angrily. "King George has enough good, loyal soldiers to sweep every rebel from the earth, without calling in the help of Indians and such men as Butler."

"You, I suppose, were left here under guard?"

"Yes, that painted Indian, that follows him like a shadow, and who, I suppose, has killed scores of people, keeps watch below, ready to pounce upon us if we attempt to go out."

"He is not there now."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"He is dead—has been dead several minutes."

"Ah! you have finished him, I suppose."

"No; it was not I who did it. Catfoot and he had a conflict, in which the Oneida was victorious. I suppose, Thugwan, as they call him, was as fiendish as his master; but his scalping days are done, and babes and children and women may now draw their breath in peace."

"This is good news indeed, for I detested the sight of that savage. Butler brought him to our house once or twice, till I forbid him. He looked so repulsive, that I never felt easy with him near."

"You understand, then, that you are perfectly free to go where you please. Without presuming to dictate, I would urge you to leave the house at once, for there is no telling when some of Butler's Indians may return. What think you, Bailey?"

"We'll all make ourselves scarce afore daylight. I don't think it anyways likely that Butler himself will be back for several days. He is in a hurry to get to Cherry Valley

Howsumever, maybe one or two of his Injins may be looking around here."

By this time, the scout, through the medium of sounds and a few whispered words, had made Captain Heath understand that Honyost Schuyler was concealed within the chimney, and that it was their purpose to subject him to a little wholesome fright. The officer at once took the initiative.

"I suppose," said he, "you noticed Honyost Schuyler, with Captain Butler?"

Mr. Gardner and Buck Bailey both answered yes.

"Well, I only wish I could lay hands upon him. He ought to be burned alive, or subjected to slow death! He has always been treated as a favorite servant at the house of Mr. Gardner, and now, as payment for kindness, he turns against his old employer in his hour of need. Ugh! the villain! I propose, Buck, that we make a vow to burn that fellow alive! What do you say?"

"Wal, I don't know as he is worse than others with him. I wouldn't care much if he was shot, but then, Captain, what's the use of any onnecessary cruelty?"

"Such a man as he deserves no mercy. The only quarter we ought to give him, is *four quarters*! Oh! if I could lay hands upon him this minute, how I would punish him!"

"But, Captain Heath," said Edith, with a feigned seriousness, "you seem to have an especial spite against Honyost. It is true he has shown no gratitnde, but let us be merciful to him, as we all hope the One above to be merciful to us."

"Don't talk to me of mercy, when such a villain as he is spoken of," returned the officer, with a tragic air. "I may feel it when Butler or one of his Iroquois ask it, but let no one attempt to excuse that Honyost Schuyler."

"Don't be so savage, Captain," said the scout, coughing continually to restrain his mirth; "for, as Butler has gone away, you can't expect to see Honyost for some time yet."

"I am not so sure of that. Catfoot followed Butler's party but he saw nothing of him in it. I shouldn't wonder now if he is somewhere in the building. Let's search for him!"

"We have hardly the time to spare," said Mr. Gardner. "If he is here, let the poor wretch be, while we attend to our own safety."

"Well, I don't suppose he is really worth the trouble. But I am of the opinion that we run no risk by remaining in the building over night. I propose that we do it. *I will start a fire in the fire-place!*"

An audible groan issued from the latter place, as these words were uttered. All did their utmost to restrain their laughter, while the jovial scout seemed in danger of apoplexy from the efforts he made to keep from shouting.

"What do you say?" pursued Captain Heath. "Shall we have a fire or not?"

"No, no," it is not cold enough to make it uncomfortable without one," replied Edith.

"I am decidedly in favor of it. What kind of a fire-place have you? Let me look at it, to see if it is all right."

Buck interposed:

"I'll tend to matters, Captain. You may entertain Miss Edith."

The Captain seemingly obeyed, while the scout peered in behind the board. It was too dark for him to see Honyost. "*You skelter up the chimbly, or he'll nab you!*" and then restored the board to its place. Immediately after, all heard a furious scrambling, and the falling of mortar and stones in the fire-place, caused by the desperate efforts of the frightened fellow.

"What is that?" demanded Captain Heath.

"You know the house is full of rats," answered the scout; "but I don't suppose there's any need, of being frightened about 'em."

"It would take a pretty big rat to make all that clatter. I must see what it is."

All objected, but he was not to be denied, and, seizing the light, he drew back the fire-board and looked up the chimney.

"Hallo! what's this?" and catching hold of a boot, he commenced tugging with all his strength, Honyost Schuyler resisted, but finally came sprawling down in the fire-place, and was drawn out upon the floor,

"Oh, good Mr. Heath! I am so glad to see you! Don't hurt me, please! I'll do any thing in the world for you. Please don't harm me! please don't! I'll fight for you as long as I live!"

As a matter of course, Captain Heath was furious, but the entreaties of his friends at length prevailed, and he consented to forego the bliss of vengeance for the present. As soon as Honyost realized that his life was not in imminent danger, he raised the window, sprang out before he could be prevented, and made off in the darkness as fast as his legs could carry him.

For some minutes after this unceremonious departure, the four gave vent to their mirth. The scout seemed on the point of going into spasms from excessive emotion, while even Edith could not forbear laughing. Gradually, however, with a sense of their situation, this feeling ceased, and they talked together seriously of the proper course to pursue. All were in favor of leaving the house immediately, but Mr. Gardner was so exhausted and worn down by fatigue and the scenes he had passed through, that Captain Heath was backward in proposing it.

"The bodies too of the widow and her son must have a burial," said he, "and it will not be right to leave your coachman above ground."

"What! Is Robert dead too?" asked the old man, in horrified amazement. "And did *they* kill him?"

"He lies but a short distance from the house, where he was overtaken and tomahawked in his attempt to escape."

"My God! and they only spared us! I can not understand why that demon allowed us to live."

"It was not through any mercy that he felt toward us," replied Edith. "He feared the consequences of going that far, I think."

"He will have enough of consequences, as it is."

Again that unaccountable drollery that will sometimes force itself upward at the most serious moments, came upon the daughter, as she said:

"What a son-in-law, he would make for you, father!"

"Edith, if you do not wish to offend me, never mention his name in that manner again."

"Forgive me, dear father, I was only jesting, for I know you loathe him as much as I do, but you must believe there was once a probability of such a thing."

Captain Heath was an amused listener to the badinage of

Edith, but he was too polite to intrude any observation of his own at such a time. When the conversation was ended, he said :

"If Mr Gardner is too fatigued to bear much walking at present, we will remain here until morning."

"I do feel jaded, but, if my daughter or myself is endangered by remaining here, let us not stay another moment."

"It seems to me that there is no likelihood of either Butler or any of his Indians returning, unless Honoyost Schuyler should come up with them, and let him know what has occurred—and it does not seem at all probable that the frightened fellow will see any thing of them before daylight. What think you, Buck?"

"There's no telling the twistings and confluements of an Indian's brain, and the whole party may get it into their heads to take the back-track, and be on their way to the house this minute. Howsumever," he added, as he noticed the effect of his words, "I don't think it at all likely they'll do any such thing as that, and I ain't afraid but what I'll sleep sound. Ha! ha! I think I'll take the fire-place for my bed."

"In case we leave, whither will you go?" asked Edith.

"To your uncle's, of course. You know we are but a few miles from his house."

"If there be any one who understands Indians and their ways, it ought to be an Indian himself, so I will call up Catfoot and consult him."

The Oneida was accordingly invited to ascend, and he immediately joined the council.

"Catfoot," said Captain Heath, "we are consulting as to what is the best course for us to pursue. The only really safe plan we know would be for us to leave this building at once, but Mr. Gardner, here, feels that it would be a severe task for him to attempt a journey to-night."

The speaker paused for the Oneida to speak, but he did not move his lips. It was not until he was directly appealed to, that he made his reply.

"Do you think any of the Indians will return to-night?"

"No come back to-night—stay away—go to Sherry Valley."

"When they hear of our being here, will they not make haste to get here again?"

"No here till to-morrow—know den too late—won't stop—go on to Sherry Valley."

"We might as well, then, remain where we are."

The Oneida signified by a downward jerk of his head, that he was of the opinion that they need have no fears of remaining in the building through the night.

"Catfoot keep watch—hear Injin if he come—take scalp like took Thugwan's," he added, in an exultant tone.

The opinion of the friendly Indian decided the matter. The four retired to different parts of the building, and, with the exception of Captain Heath, they were soon unconscious in slumber. The events of the day and night had so wrought upon his nerves, that he found it impossible to sleep. He occupied the same apartment with Bailey, who, heedless of his uneasy tossing to and fro, slept soundly.

Finding it useless to attempt to get any rest, the officer arose and descended to where the Oneida had taken his position for the night. To his surprise, he was gone. He made no response to his call, proving that he was not in the building. He waited for over an hour, and was beginning to be seriously troubled at his absence, when the door was softly parted, and, outlined against the dark sky behind, he saw the form of Catfoot. The room being perfectly dark, the savage was not aware of his presence until he spoke.

"What has kept you away so long?"

"Go git 'nudder scalp!" replied the Oneida, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Whose is it? Has there been any one prowling around?"

"Injin come back—Catfoot take his scalp."

"Tell me all about it," said the officer, considerably excited for the safety of those above.

"Catfoot lay here—bime-by hear noise—some one crawlin' out-door—call for Thugwan. *Ughle! Ooghle!* no Thugwan say nottin," said the Oneida, with a guttural laugh. "Bime-by cail out 'gin, and Catfoot speak. Mohawk knowed 'want Thugwan speak—run fast—Catfoot step out door, catch him, took off his scalp."

"Was there but one?"

"Dat all."

"Was he one of the Mohawks who was here to-day?"

"Yah—here wid Butler—come back agin alone."

"What made him do that?"

"Bad Injin—want to get scalp of old man and gai—gii Thugwan to help him—bad Injin—won't take woman's scalp no more."

Captain Heath understood, from what the Oneida had said, that one of the Mohawks had stealthily left the party, and revisited the house, for the purpose of murdering the two prisoners who remained there, well knowing that the merciless Cayuga would not refuse to join him in the evil work. Instead of meeting Thugwan, he met his own well-merited doom.

As soon as it was fairly light, the inmates of the house were astir. After breakfast, the solemn duty of burying the dead was discharged. The widow and son were brought down tenderly from the room where they lay side by side, cold and stiff; the coachman was laid by them, and in a broad and deep grave they were deposited, and covered over with their mother earth. Within a short distance of them lay the body of him who had caused all this woe. Both he and his dusky brother were allowed to remain where they were, to corrupt under the noonday sun, a warning of the retribution that is sure, to overtake the transgressor sooner or later.

The sun was just above the hills when the little company took their departure from the place that had been the scene of so much excitement and distress. The Oneida acted as their guide, or more properly as their scout. Their progress was regulated to the endurance of Mr. Gardner. After a several hour's walk, relieved by occasional pauses for rest, they reached the residence of his brother.

Satisfied that father and daughter were as secure as it was possible for them to be, the three bade them a temporary farewell, and hastened away to take their part in more important events that were already beginning to occur.

CHAPTER XII.

BAGGING THE BRUTE.

"————!" which may be supposed to represent Butler's exclamations, when Honyost Schuyler gave him an account of what had occurred at the farm-house. Especially when he learned that Captain Heath and Buck Bailey were both concealed in the building during the entire day that he and his Indians occupied it; that Thugwan had, in all probability, been slain, and that, beyond a doubt, his prisoners were now safely beyond his reach—when he learned this, and surmised more, his rage was terrible. Despite the positive injunctions of his superior officers, he at first determined to return with all haste and make the attempt to recover them, but as his excitement moderated, his usual shrewdness and forethought returned, and he saw that, trying as it was, there was no alternative but to submit for the present.

When the Tory arrived in Cherry Valley, he commenced at once to spread the proclamation of his brother, Colonel Butler. The more effectually to accomplish his ends, he issued notices to his adherents of a meeting, at which he agreed to harangue them upon the all-exciting topic of the day. These notices were widely spread, and succeeded in attracting considerable numbers at the appointed time.

Honyost Schuyler stood by the elbow of Butler, and performed the office of *anticipator*, so acceptable at all times to a public speaker. He looked in the face of the auditors, and, if he detected the premonitions of a smile, he instantly sprang into the air, clapped his hands, and burst into his boisterous "haw! haw! haw!" which always proved infectious. Whether it was his ludicrous figure and manner, or whether the art of the speaker, that so often threw the audience into convulsions of laughter, is a matter that cannot be settled by us.

The meeting was held at the house of a man named Shoemaker, who was widely known as one of the rankest kind of Tories. His feelings against the rebels were as bitter as those of Butler himself, while all of the auditors seemed equally

intense in their hatred. Secure in the dwelling, they certainly anticipated no drawback to their loyal enthusiasm.

By some means, notice of this meeting came to the knowledge of the officer commanding at Fort Dayton, but a short distance away. He at once dispatched a detachment of troops to break it up. Butler was in the midst of his harangue, when the door was burst open, and an officer announced that they were all prisoners. The sight of bristling bayonets upon the outside, emphasized this announcement, and all surrendered at discretion.

The entire number were marched away to Fort Dayton, where they were placed in the hands of General Benedict Arnold, who, with General Larned, commanded the patriot forces that had marched to the relief of Fort Schuyler. When Butler learned that he was at the mercy of this iron-souled officer, his heart misgave him; he knew he had little claims for mercy. General Arnold already had inspired the Tories with a wholesome dread of his justice.

Most of those captured were imprisoned, but the leaders of the meeting were tried before a court-martial convened for the purpose; they were accused of being within the American lines as spies. Every one was convicted and sentenced to be hung. Among them were included, of course, Captain Butler and Honyost Schuyler.

When it became known through the American army that the famous Tory had been condemned to death, it created a sensation. There were several officers who had formerly been intimate associates of Butler, and who commiserated the unfortunate situation in which he had placed himself. These friends visited General Arnold in a body, and petitioned him to revoke his sentence of capital punishment, and to hold him as a prisoner during the war.

At first the General refused to listen, but their representation finally succeeded, and he granted a reprieve. The Tory was sent as a prisoner to Albany, where, after being imprisoned several months, he feigned sickness, and was removed to the house of a Tory friend. Here he effected his escape, and, by the aid of a fleet horse, reached Niagara.

CHAPTER XIII.

HONYOST IN A NEW CHARACTER.

At Little Falls lived the mother of Honyost Schuyler, and Nicholas his brother. When these two heard that Honyost was condemned to death, they were filled with distress. The mother's grief especially was most poignant, but, mother-like, she resolved to visit General Arnold and intercede in her son's behalf.

General Arnold was seated alone within his tent, occupied in examining papers, and plans that had been devised for assisting the beleagured fort. All these but confirmed an unwelcome truth. Colonel Gansevoort was shut up in Fort Schuyler; General St. Leger with a large army, including hundreds of Tories and Indians, had completely invested it, while Arnold had been sent to attack and disperse the British army, with a force that could have been swallowed up by a detachment from the enemy's divisions.

How, therefore, he could perform the work entrusted to him was a question full of grave doubts. Inspiring his army with his own fiery impetuosity, he could make an assault upon the British that might effect a temporary relief; but he well knew that when the insignificant force under him became known to St. Leger, as it certainly must be known, in case of such a demonstration, he would in turn be attacked and dispersed.

In this reverie, he was interrupted by the announcement that a lady was waiting to see him. He gave orders for her to be introduced. A tall woman, with hair partly gray, and a face upon which were traces of deep grief that had lately come upon her, entered. She was attired plainly, and her action showed that she was embarrassed. But, a mother's affection carried her through.

"Will you take a seat, madam?" said General Arnold, rising and offering her one. She accepted it.

"Will you state what I can do for you, madam," he asked.

The woman moved her lips to speak, and then burst into a violent fit of weeping. The General was thus given a premonition of what was coming. He felt a strong antipathy to hear her further; but, he did not allow his countenance or manner to show that he experienced any such emotion. He calmly waited until the sorrow-stricken woman ejaculated amid her sobs.

"My son—my son—my son!"

"What is his name?"

"Honyost Schuyler—my poor child that is condemned to death!"

"What I expected!" muttered Arnold to himself. He said nothing further until the mother had recovered somewhat her equanimity, and then he addressed her:

"Mrs. Schuyler, I trust you are a sensible woman, and I shall therefore speak to you on the supposition that you are such. It is not often in a case like this, especially when my mind is so pre-occupied as it now is, that I consent to hold conversation and explain my actions to a petitioner. But, I will do so with you. In the first place, are you aware of the circumstances under which Honyost Schuyler, your son, was taken?"

"He was taken with many others who were not doing any thing at all that could harm a person in the world," replied the mother, the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"He has been very active in fighting against the land that gave him birth, and that has treated him as its own son. He has done much harm——"

"But haven't others done the same?"

"Yes, and perhaps more than he has. But, you must know, my good woman, that it was done in another way. Had he remained *outside* of our lines, and been captured, or had it occurred during battle, he would be held as a simple prisoner of war. But, Mrs. Schuyler, please understand what I am now about to say. There is a law in war, which if broken, can only be punished with death. If a soldier is caught acting as a spy, he must be killed by those who take him. The British serve our men in that manner, and we do the same with theirs. Honyost Schuyler has been taken, tried, and condemned as a spy, and now can you tell me why he should not suffer the death of a spy?"

Foolish General Arnold! He had attempted to weigh in the balance the reason of a woman against her affection, not knowing that it was impossible for them to poise for an instant. Her reply was a fit of weeping and the pertinent inquiry:

"Captain Butler is not going to be hung and he was doing more than my poor half-witted son."

General Arnold arose to his feet. He was perplexed and tired of the interview. He saw he could accomplish nothing by attempting to reason with the woman before him. Her whole soul was absorbed in the one idea of procuring a reprieve for her condemned child, and her mind could take in nothing else for the time.

"Madam," said he, "it is useless to continue this conversation any longer. *Your son must die*, that be assured. My time is precious, and I cannot wait any more."

The mother was down on her knees, with her hands clasped, her face upturned and streaming with tears.

"O spare my child! spare him, and he shall serve you as long as he lives! I and my other son, Nicholas, will toil for you as long as we have the breath of life. Remember that he has not the sense of those who have led into this wrong; remember that he would have done different, had he known more. O remember this, and be merciful to him, as I pray God may be merciful to you when you plead for it. Be forgiving and you shall never be sorry that you was merciful to poor, half-witted Honyost Schuyler!"

Above all things, General Arnold hated *scenes*; and his present position therefore was most embarrassing. He had given over the idea of attempting to silence her by argument, or of inducing her to leave of her own accord, before her prayer was answered. He was about to call in one of his men to remove her, when an idea struck him.

"Mrs. Schuyler, I will give your son a chance to save his life. If he will go into the British lines as a spy for me, perform a task that I shall give him, and return again, his life shall be spared."

It seemed that the mother would go mad with joy! She would have embraced the knees of General Arnold had he not prevented. For a few moments she was wild in her demonstrations.

"He will do it! he will do it! there is nothing that he will refuse to do for General Arnold! He will die for him!"

"Calm yourself, my good woman, and let us converse sensibly about it. In the first place, you see, I must trust a great deal to the honesty of Honyost."

"Oh! he will be honest! You need not fear him, after what you have done for him."

"That may all be; but, suppose he should take it into his head, after getting into the British lines, and safely out of my reach, to befriend them instead of us? See, what harm he could inflict upon us."

"Oh! never, *never* think of that! He would not do such a thing for the world."

"Probably not," replied Arnold; "but, I must require some surety at your hands that he shall faithfully perform the duty that I entrust to him."

"Take me, take me, kill me, if he does not come back! Put me in his place—put me in his place—slay me if he does not do every single thing you wish him to do!" exclaimed the mother, with impetuous anxiety.

"We never execute death upon women," answered Arnold; "but, you speak of another son of yours."

"Yes; Nicholas, I left him at home, at the Little Falls. He will take Honyost's place, and you may hang him if Honyost disobeys you in a single word."

"That will answer. You may now depart, and, as soon as your son reaches here, we will make the arrangements. Understand, that in case of treachery upon the part of Honyost, his brother Nicholas shall die, just as sure as I live!"

The mother was too overjoyed to have her heart impressed by any additional words that General Arnold might say. She insisted on kissing his hand, and then took her departure to her quiet home at Little Falls, to bring back to him the required hostage.

General Arnold stood a moment in deep thought. The idea that had come to him during his conversation with Mrs. Schuyler was one fraught with momentous consequence, not only to his own army, and beleaguered Fort Schuyler, but to the cause itself. He saw how, if successful, it would disperse the soldiers, Tories and Indians under St. Leger, and revive

the drooping hearts of the patriots through the Mohawk Valley and Central New York; how it would send cheer to the anxious heart of Washington, and nerve the Continental army to greater deeds and to greater privations in the performance of the holy duty they had taken upon themselves!

He saw, too, that if the plan failed, it would be no common failure, but one that was disastrous and disheartening. Failure meant the capture of Fort Schuyler, the capture or dispersion of his own army, and the inauguration of a reign of blood and terror through the Mohawk Valley. That beautiful section would be laid open to the Tories and Indians.

But the daring soul of Benedict Arnold did not hesitate to incur this risk. The cause in which he was engaged required such desperate ventures, and he was the lion-hearted man to carry them through. Having fully matured the plan in his own mind, he sent for Honyost Schuyler.

"Honyost Schuyler," said the General, "you know that you have been tried as a spy and found guilty."

The man gazed into the face of the officer with a blank, stolid look, as if he did not comprehend the question.

"It is true, you have been condemned to death, but, I am going to offer you a chance of life. Your mother has been here and implored that I should spare you. I consent to do so upon one condition, and that is, that you perform a certain duty for me. Will you do it?"

"Haw! haw! haw! will I do it! I reckon I'll do any thing you've a mind to ax me. What is it now? Do you want me to stand upon my head for a couple of hours, to get into the British army and bring St. Leger in upon my back?"

The poor fellow was uproarious in his manifestations of joy. Arnold ordered him to be seated, but for a time, it was impossible to make him obey. He turned a pirouette around the room, gave vent to a half dozen war-hoops, kicked over a chair, and cracked his heels together, and then assuming a serious air, announced himself ready.

"In the first place," said the General, "you must understand that your life is not yet secured to you. It depends entirely upon your own action. I wish you to enter St. Leger's army as a spy for me. If you do that, and come

safely back to me, I will spare your life. Are you willing to undertake such a task?"

"Undertake it! Don't ask me any thing, only command me—yes, command me. and I will do it! haw! haw! haw!"

The sly expression of Honyost Schuyler at the announcement of this duty did not escape the keen eye of General Arnold.

"I wish you to make your way to St. Leger's camp, state that our army is double the size of his, that they are abundantly supplied with artillery, and that we are marching to attack him at once. During your absence," added the General in his impressive and deliberate tones, "your brother Nicholas will remain in our hands as a hostage. In case the British army attack us, I shall take it for granted that you have played us false, and shall have him hung at once. You understand the conditions, I suppose."

"Yes," replied Honyost, with a serious face. "I understand 'em and think they're all right."

"It matters little to me what you *think* of it. You can take your choice of the conditions—either to hang, or play the spy, as you have so often done against us."

"Haw! haw! haw?" roared the mercurial creature; "won't I make St. Leger shake in his boots." I tell you, I'll be the means of scattering the red coats and red-skins with all their great guns and hosses."

"We will arrange it so that several deserters shall follow you. Catfoot is in camp and others as good, who will join."

"How soon do you want me to start?"

"Just as soon as your brother is safe in our hands."

The siege of Fort Schuyler continued. Colonel Gansevoort, and his brave garrison held out, while completely invested by the large army of St. Leger. Beyond the latter, were Generals Arnold, Larned and their forces, too feeble to assail their enemies, who were sandwiched as it were, between the fort and themselves.

In this state affairs had remained for a considerable time, when the ruse of the American General, at which we already have hinted, was attempted—a ruse, to result in complete success or in total disaster.

Some hours after the interview with Arnold, Honyost

Schuyler, and Catfoot, the Oneida, stood alone in the woods, a short distance from the British army. The clothes of the former seemed in a sad plight, being torn and shot through in several places, while the Indian was so thoroughly disguised by his paint and war dress, that it is doubtful whether his old enemy, Thugwan, would have recognized him, had he been living. They had halted to converse awhile.

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Honyost. "You must put it to 'em steep, Catfoot."

"You tell big lie."

"I expect to tell 'em such yarns, that I'll be 'stonished to hear 'em. I'm a purty hard case, I know; but there's one thing I would never do—and that is, *lie*."

"Talk too much," interrupted the savage, impatiently.

"There's no need of hurrying, my good friend. But I expect to tell some whoppers now, and to do it in a good cause—that is, the cause of Honyost Schuyler. Let's see: I b'leve the idea is for us to go into their camp from different directions, ain't it?"

"Yeh, dat what do."

"Wall, all that remains for us is to get in there as quick as possible, and to go to manufacturing our yarns at once."

"We go now," said the Oneida.

The two separated. It was so arranged that Honyost was to go directly into the British camp, while Catfoot, by taking a circuitous route, was to come upon it from a different direction. In case of meeting, these two were to feign entire ignorance of each other—it being settled, however, beforehand, that their stories should agree in the main particulars.

After walking some distance, Honyost began to run at the top of his speed. When he reached the pickets, he was panting and exhausted, and, for a time, unable to give an account of himself. He was so well known in the British army, that several recognized him at once. He gave an account of the capture of Captain Butler and himself, and of his own narrow escape. He stated that he was condemned to death, and was being led to the gallows, when, through the carelessness of the guard, he was enabled to break away from them. He added, that General Arnold was marching with six thousand men to attack the English forces.

This story spread like wild-fire through the camp. It had just fairly permeated it, and had its effect, when Catfoot and several Oneida Indians (whom he had encountered on the way) came in from an opposite direction, with substantially the same account. Shortly after, Buck Bailey, so completely disguised, that he passed within a foot of Catfoot, without his identity being discovered by that wily savage, came into the lines as a deserter. His story, if possible, was more frightful than any of his predecessors. He was certain the entire army would be killed or be made prisoners before sunset.

Such was the panic created by these startling asseverations, that St. Leger convened a council of war at once.

It will be recollected that a considerable portion of the British army, under Colonel St. Leger and Sir John Johnson, was composed of Indians. These were mostly drawn from the Six Nations, and were under the direct command of the half-breed, Brandt. Most of them had participated in the battle of Oriskany, where they had suffered severely. In addition to this, they had been disappointed in the present siege. Their leaders had promised that the Yankee fort should be taken at the end of a few days at the most, and that it should be turned over to their hands at once for bloodshed and massacre.

Instead of matters terminating thus, the fort had held out for weeks, and seemed no nearer capitulation than at first. Many of the most renowned warriors of the Indians had been picked off by the American sharpshooters, and the remainder were in that morbid state of mind, when, but the slightest breath was cause for them to take their departure.

The effect, therefore, of the Oneida Indians, when they came among them, may well be imagined. Their discontent changed to insubordination, Brandt, himself, making common cause with them and urging them to depart. Such was the state of affairs, when St. Leger called his council of war.

He had summoned Honyost Schuyler before him, and now listened to his story. The account of his capture and escape, the council cared little for. They wished to know the number of the Americans. "Like the leaves of the trees—thousands!" he replied, the fellow carrying out to the letter his promise to General Arnold.

Catfoot was next placed upon the stand. His short, sententious replies, evidently impressed his listeners as truth itself; and, inasmuch as they agreed with the statements of Honyost, the council considered that his narration, was true.

The deserter's testimony only corroborated what the others had said. Little did those British officers imagine that deserter to be the renowned Buck Bailey, the scout of Cherry Valley, who poured his plausible stories in their ears.

The council of war was stormy. The officers were excited and heedless of their words. When discussion was running high, word came to St. Leger that Brandt and his Indian allies were preparing to leave. He immediately hastened out to prevent it.

He made his appearance before the Indians, upon the very eve of their departure. The first proceeding was to command them to return to their duty. Every officer who has had command of American Indians, from Brandt, down to Albert Pike, need not be told how lightly they regard army discipline. The order of St. Leger was received with scowling brows, which showed that officer plainly enough that not one of them intended to respect his command. He expostulated with Brandt, himself, against such desertion; but the Indian blood of the half-breed was up, and remonstrance but increased his obstinacy. From expostulations, St. Leger naturally glided into entreaties, both to the savages and to their leader. This proved as useless as orders—the Indians continuing their preparations before his eyes.

Irritated beyond measure, St. Leger strode back to the tent where the council of war was still in session, and said:

"Brandt and the Indians are all going. If General Arnold's forces were not half the number they are reported to be, it would hardly be safe now to risk an encounter.

"Why are the savages leaving us?" inquired Johnson.

"Because they believe the Americans are coming down upon them in numbers sufficient to devour them. The infernal rumors are playing the mischief with us."

"It is strange," continued Johnson, in meaning tones, "that the American army should be so close to us for so long a time, without our being able to learn its real strength."

St. Leger understood this remark to be a reference to his neglect in not obtaining such information. Prominent as was the position held by Sir John Johnson, the General was in no mood to receive any such criticisms from him.

"Strange, indeed, that, with the Superintendent of Indian Affairs among us, we have not been able to induce a single member of the Iroquois to bring us the intelligence."

"I was not aware," replied Sir John Johnson, in considerable heat, "that it was considered the duty of a subordinate to take upon himself the management of an army in the presence of his superior, unless the latter particularly requested him so to do."

"Nor was I aware before this, that it was the duty of a subordinate officer to criticise the action of his commander. It seems, however, that a new era in the management of military affairs is about to be introduced."

"When the incapability of a leader is evident to every lieutenant, some means should be taken to prevent his bringing disaster upon the army under him."

"What a pity, Colonel Johnson, we had not availed ourselves of your ability in the conduct of this campaign."

"I could not have failed more signally than you have done," replied the baronet, growing more angry each moment.

"In this state of affairs, will you please inform me what part you have taken to prevent its occurrence?"

"I have done my duty—and that is more than you, St. Leger, can say. If you had shown any ability at all, we should not have been compelled to rely upon these statements that have just come to us; nor would they have caused this panic among the Indians."

"When I consider it necessary to come to you for advice I shall do so; until then, Sir John Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, you will please keep your advice to yourself. I want none of it."

"Whether you do or not—"

"*They are coming! They are coming!*" was shouted by Catfoot and another Oneida, in tones that were heard distinct and clear by the council of war. Honyost Schuyler, Buck Bailey and a hundred different throats instantly caught up the startling cry, until it echoed from end to end of the army.

A scene of the wildest panic instantly followed. St. Leger and Sir John Johnson caught it at once. Ceasing their altercation, each sprang to horse, and led their troops in their disorderly flight. Within a half hour of the utterance of the cry by Catfoot and his dusky brother, the entire army, officers, privates and Indians, were pouring tumultuously away from Fort Schuyler, as if pursued by death itself.

So complete was the ludicrous panic, created by one or two alarmists, that the tents remained standing, the camp equipage, provisions, artillery and ammunition, all were left behind, hundreds of the men throwing away their arms as they fled, and relieving themselves of every incumbrance.

Disappointed and exasperated, the Indians insulted their companions in flight, and finally went to tomahawking them, for the sake of the plunder upon their persons. Scores were thus stricken down by the hands of those who had been counted as their allies. "A just retribution this for employing these heathen savages in a war upon the people of the frontier settlements." When crossing Wood Creek, so great was the panic that numbers were drowned.

After crossing the stream, the voice of Honyost Schuyler gradually ceased and his whole attention seemed absorbed in attending to his own personal safety. In springing over a fallen tree, he caught his foot and fell. Instead of immediately rising he lay as if senseless. Those around were too much occupied in attending to their own safety, to attend to him.

Honyost lay until certain there were none who could see him; then he cautiously rose to his feet. Listening a moment he sprang back near the tree, then took the "back track" at the top of his speed. He was long-winded, fleet of foot, and ran a considerable distance before halting.

Making his way to Fort Schuyler, he gave that commanding officer his first information of the panic and flight of the besieging army, and of the near approach of General Arnold. Colonel Gansevoort instantly marched out in pursuit of St. Leger. He captured numbers of prisoners and all the property that we have stated they left behind. The retreat of the British army could not have been more disastrous and disgraceful, the success of the American could not have been more fruitful and inspiring.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAIN HEATH CONQUERED

ON the evening succeeding the flight and pursuit of St. Leger's army, Edith Gardner was standing at one of the windows of her uncle's house, gazing down the road over which she and her father had passed a few weeks before. She had stood thus for a half hour, her mind absorbed in reverie.

A few feet behind her sat her father and uncle, twin brothers, so much alike that it would have puzzled any eyes but those of affection to identify them. They were both smoking, and occasionally exchanging words in that absent, listless manner which only makes the indulgence of the pipe the more soothing.

Edith heeded not their words. Just then she was wondering where Captain Eugene Heath could be. She had heard nothing of him, since his departure, except a few days previous, when Buck Bailey halted at the door and told her that he had succeeded in getting into Fort Schuyler, and that shortly there would be severe fighting.

The panic-stricken and demoralized army had passed within a few miles of the spot where the girl was standing; and the avenging soldiers under Colonel Gansevoort were, during the hardest fighting, in the same neighborhood. Several times through the day, the faint report of guns in the distance reached the ears of Edith, but, it never once struck her that they could have been caused by a flying and pursuing army.

Gradually the darkness closed over field and wood, and Edith was still heedless of what was passing around her. From her position, she could distinguish objects for some distance down the road.

Suddenly her eye was arrested by a moving figure, and at once concentrating her gaze she distinguished the outline of a man, who was rapidly approaching. Her heart throbbed violently at a suspicion that it might be the very person who had occupied her thoughts; but a moment later, she saw that it was an Indian.

Misgiving now took possession of her, but she was quickly reassured by recognizing Catfoot, the Oneida, as he came in front of the house. Suspecting that he was upon some errand, she asked :

"Is any thing the matter, Catfoot, with our friends? Come in the house," she added, as he halted outside. The savage shook his head.

"In big hurry—Catfoot no got time."

"Did you wish to see me, or my father?"

"Want to sec gal—see you—sumthin' to speak."

"Well, let us have it," said Edith, with impatience.

"Cap'n Heath down the road—comin'."

"I am glad to hear it. My friends are always welcome."

"Ain't well—Cap'n be sick."

"Ah! how is that? Is he dangerously so?"

"Dunno—two bullet hit Cap'n Heath—two Mohawk shoot him—Catfoot got dere scalps," added the Oneida, with a grim smile, looking down to the trophies that hung at his girdle.

Edith now comprehended that Captain Heath was badly wounded, and that the savage had been sent forward to prepare them for his arrival. She hurried within the house to make ready for the unfortunate officer.

"Wounded, is he? poor fellow!" exclaimed Mr. Gardner, bustling around in his usual way, without accomplishing any thing. "I'm sorry for him, if he is a rebel! Good fellow, though, for all that! Daughter, we must act the part of the good Samaritan to him—take him in—take care of him. If the Lord be willing, we'll make him well soon as we can—you know, so that he can go to work and fight the rest of his battles, ha! ha! ha!"

"You know I have studied medicine, dear, though I've been out of practice ever since you were born. Howsumever, I'll be able to get my hand in again, ha! ha!"

Edith returned the kiss of her father, and then took her station at the window, to watch for the appearance of her friend. She had not long to wait. In a few moments she again caught the figure of Catfoot, this time upon a horse. Directly behind him four men bore a litter, and who it was that lay upon it, her own rapidly-beating heart told. She and her father and uncle passed outside the gate to receive it.

As Captain Heath saw them, he rose to a sitting position and greeted them with a smile.

"A bad plight in which to make my appearance," said he, with a laugh. "I am ashamed that it is thus."

"Hang it, lie down again!" commanded Mr. Gardner; "I'm your physician, and you must obey me. Walk carefully up those steps—right up stairs—into the first door you see; then on your right—right on the bed—put him down gently."

These commands were issued during the labored progress of the party up stairs, the last exclamation being given at the moment that Captain Heath was laid upon the bed. This done, Mr. Gardner ordered every one from the room, while he examined the wounds of his patient. He found that a bullet had passed through the shoulder, and one through the side. Both were severe—the first having broken a bone, and the second having torn up the flesh badly.

"You are cut up considerably," said Mr. Gardner, "and it will take several months to bring you all right. But there's no danger of you, only keep quiet—if you only keep *quiet*!"

Under the skilful management of Mr. Gardner, and the careful nursing of his daughter, Captain Heath soon was very comfortable. Upon the day succeeding his arrival, his companions took their departure, so that he was left alone with the two old gentleman and Edith.

At intervals of a few weeks, Buck Bailey and Catfoot paused at the house to learn the stage of convalescence which their friend had reached. The scout, several times, had remained over night, and recounted to the household the marvelous success of the ruse of Honyost Schuyler. The idea of the siege of an invested fort being raised, and a large army scattered, by the doings of a half-witted person, amused the two old men greatly.

It was hardly to be believed that these two highly-seasoned loyalists were already converts to the rebel cause; but it was self-evident that the views and prejudices of Mr. Gardner had been sensibly affected during the past few months. Captain Heath congratulated himself that the old men were gravitating toward the patriot cause more rapidly than could have been expected.

As soon as affairs became more settled through the Mo-

hawk Valley, it had been the intention of Mr. Gardner to return to his residence in Cherry Valley. His horses had been recovered, and the coach repaired, so that he was provided with the means whenever he possessed the inclination.

The condition of Captain Heath's wound deferred the proposed journey until the summer had passed, and Autumn was upon them. It was fixed that they should return in November. November, the officer being confident that by that time he would be very nearly, if not quite, recovered.

Ah! those days of sickness, and of the gentle administration of Edith Gardner! Our pen cannot paint their calm enjoyment! Who of our poor soldiers, when lying weak and helpless in the hospital, has not looked upon the nurse attending him as a very angel from heaven? What though the face was plain and homely, was there not a divine beauty that illuminated it as she spoke soft and cheering words to you? Did not the kind, pitying light of those eyes call back to your remembrance your own sainted mother, beside whose knee you had bowed in infancy? As those cool hands were placed upon your fevered brow, or as the fingers ran rapidly over the sheet, to bear your words to your distant home, or were as faithful as the time-piece itself to administer the draught, what wonder that your simple nature exalted humanity to divinity?

Suppose that, to the conditions specified above, we add the one that, the watcher beside your bed should be she who has long possessed the purest affection of your heart; who in your estimation has sat upon the pinnacle which can hold no other being on earth; suppose, we say, that this was the being, whom you loved above all others, what is to be expected? What is certain to occur?

Why, that your love is sanctified of every dross. For the first time in your life you gain a true idea of her value, and an appreciable sense of your own selfish nature, that never before vested her with such heavenly attributes. And, after passing the dreadful crisis of your fever, you lie weak and helpless bodily, but with all your natural mental strength, and spend hour after hour in the long, sultry afternoons in gazing into the sweet, subdued face, does it not happen that you speculate seriously with yourself, and wonder how it is that she is treading earth, and not using her wings to fly to Heaven?

Such, at all events, was the experience of Captain Eugene Heath. It was on one of those warm, still afternoons in August that he lay looking in the face of Edith, who, just then was occupied in reading, in just such a mood as we have described. The two old men were indulging themselves in their afternoon nap, the voices of the servants sounded faint and distant below stairs, and in the holeysuckle that clambered over and around the window, was heard that musically monotonous buzz and hum of the bees that were boring into their depths. Monotonous, yet soothing and sweet, were these sounds. Presently Edith laid aside her book.

"Edith," said Captain Heath, "do you never grow weary of sitting hour after hour in this room?"

She looked smilingly upon him a moment, and then shook her head without speaking.

"How great a sacrifice it must be to you?"

"It should be a sacrifice to no one. During the past few weeks, I have come to the belief that the sick room is a means of discipline through which we should all pass before entering upon the real duties of life. No one can spend a week by the bedside of a sufferer without being made stronger and better."

"You feel 'stronger' and 'better,' do you?" asked the patient, smiling in turn.

"A hundred times more patient at heart."

"I never imagined that you could become any more patient or any better," added Captain Heath, still smiling, as he raised himself upon his elbow, and gazed fondly upon her. "It may have been because you were already lifted so far above my sinful self."

"Thinking thus, you have done me wrong, and you will do me a greater wrong if you continue to think so. I would not recall the past five or six weeks for the world."

"Nor would I," said Captain Heath, with visible emotion.

"Indeed, I am glad if it has benefited you morally, although it has not in any other manner. You have, then, learned your lesson, have you?"

"I have," replied the officer, looking straight in her face, "I have learned the true value of a woman such as you are. Your patient, self-denying spirit--your never-tiring kindness,

your devotion, have exalted you, Edith, higher than any romantic fancy ever could have placed you—”

“I am afraid there is something of your fever still lurking in your head,” interrupted Edith, with a smile, blushing at the same time, at the fervent compliments which were poured into her ear.

“Ah me!” sighed Captain Heath, with a tragic resignation as he sank back upon his pillow, “I am afraid the fever isn’t troubling my *brain*.”

“What then?” The inquiry was almost unconsciously uttered.

“It must be my *heart*,” he replied, with a sly expression, as he turned his head toward her.

“Fever of the heart!” exclaimed Edith, pretending to take the literal meaning of the words. “I shall have to call father. That is a new turn of your affliction.”

“I beg you will not call him. He can do nothing, I assure you, for this complaint. It is entirely beyond his skill—”

“But it must be attended to—”

“Just what I am thinking. *You*, Edith, are the only physician that can assist me—you only possess the remedy—you only can pour balm into the wound—you alone can make me wish to live! Will you not—hang it, there is Mr. Gardner, this minute!”

And Captain Heath instantly shut both eyes, and breathed heavily, as if in a profound slumber.

“O you rascal, you needn’t pretend you are asleep! I heard you jabbering just now! Haw! ha! you can’t deceive me. Come, open your eyes!”

“Ooogh-o-ah-uh-oo!” yawned Captain Heath. Then as he lost his bewildered look, he fixed his gaze upon the old gentleman before him.

“Glad to see you, Mr. Gardner—”

“That is a falsehood. It is no such thing. No man likes to see any one else at the moment he is popping the question; he *hates* it, sir—hates it! and you’d give your heart, sir, if I had been a half mile away.”

“Do not be too severe,” interrupted Edith, “he told me a few moments since that he was troubled with the fever of the heart. I was about to call you to prescribe for him.”

"Ah! I am glad then that I came!" said Mr. Gardner, assuming a very serious countenance." It must be attended to immediately. Let me examine your pulse. Beat—quick, regular—rather rapid—showing that fever lurks somewhere—yes, the heart throbs faster than ordinary. How long, my friend, do you suppose this fever has been upon you?"

Captain Heath seeing that he was fairly detected, assumed also an air of gravity as he made reply.

"The first symptoms appeared several years ago—I think, about the time I made a call in company with Captain Butler, at your house."

"Several years ago—that is singular," soliloquised Mr. Gardner; "been in his system ever since—doubtful whether it can be eradicated or not; I hardly know what to prescribe."

"I think I can make up the prescription myself, if you will only consent to administer it. It is in your hands."

"I consent. Let me know what it is."

"*Edith Gardner!* It's out now!"

"My own beloved daughter!" exclaimed Mr. Gardner rising to his feet, as if he had been stricken by a thunder bolt." A difficult dose for me to take as well as to give; but, I agreed to do it. Do you consent my dearest girl?" For a moment the daughter made no reply. Then speaking so low that she intended it should reach her parent's ear only.

"Whatever you wish me to do, that will be my highest pleasure to do."

"Ah! ah! I understand what that means. Just the way your mother talked forty years ago to *her* father! Well, you young scamp, inasmuch as you have already taken the heart, I consent to administer the dose. I give her to you, on condition that you never take her from my home. Death alone must separate us."

"I give you the pledge!" said Captain Heath, rising to the sitting position, his face all aglow with happiness. "If Edith will take me, she never shall be asked to thwart your simplest wish, I shall be to her—anything——"

"But," interrupted the blushing maiden, "my dear father forgets what he once said by his daughter marrying a *rebel*."

"Shut your mouth, rogue! I don't know but what the *rebels* are about half right. Don't say another word about it."

And the old man passed out of the room.

"My dear good father!" exclaimed Edith. "I *knew* he would soon be on the right side. It takes some time for him to overcome his prejudices, but he always does it sooner or later. Heaven bless him! he need not *ask* any thing of his daughter that she suspects is his wish. I would die for him, any moment."

"I do not doubt it. Edith, you are a good daughter."

The invalid lay several moments feasting his eyes upon the careful woman by his bedside—beautiful in her faithful affection and dutifulness to her parent and to him—far more lovely in her moral nature than her physical—although the latter, to Captain Heath, exceeded that of any woman he had ever known. When he spoke it was in a voice that was low and deep with earnest feeling.

"*Edith, do you really love me?*"

The lip of the girl quivered for a moment, and then bowing her head, she replied, "*Yes!*"

"I'm well!" exclaimed Captain Heath, joyously. "Never felt as I do now, in all my existence."

"You must rest. In a few days I trust you will be better," said Edith, checking his further utterance.

Time passed swiftly, and the summer was soon gone over. Captain Heath recovered rapidly, and, during the golden Indian summer rode out frequently upon his horse. Buck Bailey did not forget to make his visits, and to keep him well informed of passing events. These were of such a nature that they occasioned the officer no anxiety until toward the middle of the autumn, when Catfoot, who had been on an expedition with several Oneidas in the upper portion of the State, brought alarming tidings of Captain Butler.

The Tory, upon escaping from his imprisonment at Albany, made all haste to Niagara, and, in revenge for the imprisonment he had suffered at the hands of Tryon County, planned an expedition against Cherry Valley. From Colonel Butler, his brother, he had procured the command of a portion of his regiment known as "Butler's Rangers," and the right also to employ the Indians under the command of Brandt.

The commander of the fort at Cherry Valley had been

warned by Catfoot and other Oneidas of this contemplated expedition, but he had refused thus far to take any means of strengthening the garrison or of instituting a better system of defence for the settlement. He would not believe that Butler would dare to make his appearance again in Tryon County, after escaping so narrowly with his life. Captain Heath was intimately acquainted with this officer, and feared the worst regarding him. The day succeeding this news he resolved that he would return to the settlement, and do all in his power to prepare the settlers against the expected invasion.

Upon communicating his intention to Mr. Gardner, that gentleman requested him to remain a few days longer, when he and his daughter would accompany him. Captain Heath, against his judgment, agreed to do so.

Upon a clear, bracing day in November, the little party set out on their return to Cherry Valley. A strong farmer's boy acted as coachman, while Captain Heath rode by the side of the carriage. Since the siege of Fort Schuyler, this section had enjoyed comparative quiet, so that Mr. Gardner felt little apprehension for the personal safety of Edith and himself. There was the shadow of a fear that haunted Captain Heath which he could not shake off. He knew the diabolical malice of Walter Butler was sufficient to lead him to any length to secure his revenge, and he believed that he and Brandt were at that time at no great distance.

On the day that they expected to reach home, the sky became overcast. There was a flurry of snow, and Mr. Gardner would have halted, but as they expected to reach the Valley in a few hours, the horses were put at a greater speed, while Captain Heath kept up a rapid gallop in front of the carriage.

They had progressed in this manner for a couple of hours, and were within a few miles of Cherry Valley, when they reached a hill of considerable length. Captain Heath rode on a canter to the top, where, halting for a moment, he suddenly wheeled around, and ordered the driver to pause. At the foot of the hill he caught sight of an Indian coming toward him on a rapid run. The long, sideling, loping trot, and a peculiar motion of the arms, showed at once that

It was Catfoot. The speed at which he ascended the hill proved unmistakeably that he bore important tidings.

"What is the matter, Catfoot?" he demanded as he approached.

"Butler and Brandt in de Valley—burn de houses—kill all people—kill de soldiers—everybody else—soon be here—go back fast!"

Captain Heath galloped to the bottom of the hill.

"Mr. Gardner," said he, looking in the carriage, "you must turn back instantly. Butler and his Tories and Indians are in the town, masscreing the inhabitants, and some of them will soon be out in the surrounding country. I have just been warned by the friendly Oneida. Not a moment is to be lost."

The carriage was instantly wheeled round—the driver manifesting almost as much fright and terror as his predecessor. The horses were put at a rapid, but not dangerous gait, Captain Heath riding some rods in the rear.

Believing that not only the settlement, but the surrounding country was in imminent danger, from the merciless savages who would hasten out upon the highways to overtake the fleeing fugitives, the officer, after riding several miles, commanded the driver to halt, and announced his intention of leaving the main road and driving into the woods.

After considerable difficulty a field was crossed, and they drove several yards into the woods, until checked by the interposing limbs of trees. Feeling that for the present they were safe, Captain Heath bade them good night, and rode out in the direction of Cherry Valley.

All through that snowy night, father, daughter, and driver watched the dull glare of burning buildings against the sky, and listened to the sounds of exultation and terror that were borne to them. Near midnight, they were excessively alarmed by the tramp of approaching feet. To their inexpressible delight, the new comers proved to be friends, and, among their number, was the ubiquitous Honyost Schuyler. The militia of the county were gathering rapidly, and the invading force was to be attacked on the morrow.

The massacre of Cherry Valley is attributed to the negligence of one man. That man was Colonel Alden, who had command of the fort

In the face of repeated warnings of the certainty of an attack from the Tories and Indians, he refused to take any means to protect the settlers around him. Information brought him by Indian scouts, he treated with indifference, if not contempt, and satisfied himself that Butler, after his narrow escape from the gallows, would not venture into Tryon County again.

On the eleventh of November, at an early hour in the morning, in the midst of a snow-storm, the enemy stole into the town and took the place by surprise. The officers, who were quartered in private houses, were surrounded, and either captured or slain. Colonel Alden, in attempting to escape, was brained by an Indian.

The scenes which followed baffled all description, and we have no desire to dwell upon them. The Minnesota massacres, so fresh in all our minds, are but a faint type of this merciless slaughter of men, women, and children. A very few were reserved for the purpose of exchange. The town was fired in several places, and was soon a heap of smoldering ruins.

The garrison in the fort made an heroic defense. They were attacked again and again by the combined forces of the Indians and Tories under, the leadership of Butler and Brandt; but, the unerring rifles of the marksmen within the fort, brought down their numbers with such deadly rapidity, that they were glad to give up the attack, and resort to the more congenial calling of destroying unresisting inhabitants.

Captain Heath and several others aroused the militia of the neighborhood. About two hundred collected and attacked the scattered bands of the enemy with such fury, that they were driven out of the county.

The rage kindled against Butler was so great, that a number resolved he should never escape from Cherry Valley. Catfoot, who had been darting hither and thither through the settlement ever since the massacre began, informed Captain Heath that he had taken a north-west direction; and that, but few of his men were with him. The officer instructed him to take a number of his brother Oneidas, and pursue the ferocious British as long as there was the least possible chance of overtaking them.

This was what the Indians desired above all things. With a dozen dusky comrades, exclusive of Buck Bailey and Honoyost Schuyler, the party took up the trail in pursuit. An hour, later they caught sight of the Tory, riding alone upon horseback. He struck into a rapid gallop upon discovering his pursuers, who followed at the top of their speed.

Butler, being mounted, had the best of it, and was rapidly leaving the party behind, when he reached a large creek. Into that he plunged, and swam his horse across. As he came upon the opposite-side, he made an insulting gesture to his pursuers. Catfoot raised his rifle, took deliberate aim, and fired. As the smoke cleared from the front of his face, he saw the Tory's horse galloping riderless away.

The Oneida, with an exultant yell, sprang ahead of his companions and swam the creek. Reaching the other side, he found Butler badly wounded. The wretch, who had been merciless to the mother and her babe, now begged piteously for life; but, the reply of the Indian was: "Oriskany, Oriskany! Remember Sherry Valley!" and five minutes later, his guilty soul stood in the presence of its all-just Creator.

Late in the day, succeeding the massacre, the party of fugitives who had been concealed in the wood, returned to Cherry Valley. In the words of the historian: "The whole settlement exhibited an aspect of entire and complete desolation. The cocks crew from the tops of the forest trees, and the dogs howled through the fields and woods."

Several attempts had been made to fire the place of Mr. Gardner, but, from some cause or other, had failed. It was not until a year or two later that the old gentleman learned that this was owing to the instrumentality of Catfoot and Honoyost Schuyler, who usually passed as friends among the devastating Tories and Indians.

Scores of fugitives found refuge at this residence, and one or two others in the neighborhood that had escaped the conflagration, while they occupied themselves in burying their friends, and endeavoring to erect shelter for themselves. From its ashes and embers, phoenix-like, this beautiful settlement rose again.

It was on a summer day, some three years succeeding the events described in the preceding pages, that Edith Gardner

and her father were seated upon the broad porch, in front of their residence. Little change had those two years wrought in either. The father looked perhaps a shade feebler, and there was a more womanly look upon the face of the daughter. But, the parent toyed with the head that lay upon his shoulder, as he always had done—fondling the ripples of hair, and pressing the warm crimson cheek against his own bloodless face. Both were in unusually good spirits, for only day or two before, they had received the intelligence that the independence of the United States had been acknowledged by Great Britain, and that peace was now declared.

"This is good news indeed, darling," said the father, as he resumed his pipe.

"Yes, I can hardly realize it, after so much war and suffering as we have undergone."

"There can be no doubt of it. That surrender of Burgoyne and Lord Cornwallis, I suppose, really decided the matter long ago."

"They have; certainly fought long enough to gain their independence."

"That is true, and I don't know but what I'm glad of it. The manner in which Colonels Johnson, Brandt, and Butler carried on the war in this section, more than any thing else, has convinced me that the Colonies were better free than otherwise. Let me see," said the old man, speaking quickly and eagerly, "we may expect Captain Heath, I suppose. Heigho! there's Honyost, he looks as though he bore some news. See him grin!"

The cadaverous Honyost was seen approaching at a rapid walk. This person, since the exploit performed in the service of General Arnold, had been a true friend to the patriots. He did good service in driving Butler and Brandt from the valley on the day succeeding the massacre, at which time he "mustered himself out," at the earnest solicitation of his mother, who could not bear that he should run the fearful risk of capture by his enemies. He dwelt with her at Little Falls, and the extraordinary success of his feat made him so celebrated, that his name was known at a far greater distance from home than he had ever traveled.

Honyost's face wore an expression of good nature, and he

burst into a loud haw! haw! as he caught sight of Mr. Gardner and Edith.

"What is it that pleases you so much?" inquired the farmer, as he came up the walk.

"I've news for Edith, haw! haw!"

"Don't keep me in suspense then," laughed the daughter.

"Haint you heard it now?"

"How am I to tell before I know what you mean?"

"Why there's peace, haw! haw!"

"That is surely good news, but we learned that several weeks ago, Honyost. Is that all the news you bring?"

"No; that ain't the news at all. Who do you s'pose is down in the valley?"

"A great many persons I should say."

"I know, but this one is a fellow what you and I thinks a good deal of."

"Buck Bailey, who has always been such a friend to us?"

"No; my brother! Nick came down from Little Falls to see the place, since they've been building it up. Ain't that good news, now?"

"Not particularly so, that I know of—"

"Wal, if *that* ain't, then it's good news that Captain Heath is there, and will be here in half an hour—yonder he comes, this minute, and I'll be hanged if Buck Bailey ain't with him!"

Edith Gardner could not repress a start, nor keep back the half-uttered exclamation of joy as she distinguished the two persons mentioned, approaching. A moment later, they both were upon the porch, receiving the congratulations of their friends. Captain Heath never looked half so handsome and gallant, in the eyes of Edith Gardner, as he did at that moment, when he stood before her in his faded uniform and sunbrowned face, which had received an ugly wound since they had last met.

"Welcome, welcome, welcome!" said Mr. Gardner, as the tears came in his eyes, and he shook the hands of the newcomers. "You come now, never to go to war again, I trust."

"I hope so, although Buck was just telling me that he has become so used to it, that he does not know how he will content himself."

The jovial hunter seemed unspeakably full of joy and good humor, as he did nothing but laugh and shake hands, and shake hands and laugh. This, combined with the uproar of Honyost Schuyler, for the time drowned every thing else. When they had become somewhat quieted, Mr. Gardner said

"We were expecting you, Captain—Edith especially."

"I am glad to hear it," replied the officer, who had taken her hand, and who stood looking down in her radiant face

"I hope it will be the last time you will ever expect me."

"What do you mean?"

"As she has promised never to leave your roof, I ask permission to remain under it myself, as one of the most dutiful and faithful sons-in-law that you can possibly have—"

"Tut, tut, there's some of your foolish questions again. Ask her!"

"I have already done so."

"Well, I am sure that is sufficient, without bothering me—confound the noise."

Buck Bailey and Honyost Schuyler were indulging their mirth to an immoderate extent, but gradually they became more quiet, and their feelings grew more thoughtful and subdued, for they were disbanded volunteers, who were soon to pursue their ways in widely different spheres—Honyost to till the soil at Little Falls, and Buck to take up his march for the far West.

Captain Eugene Heath and Edith, his companion in life: they too, became more quiet, and their feelings more thoughtful and subdued as the years followed one after another, and until full of days and honor and happiness, they were finally laid in the valley with their fathers.

THE END.

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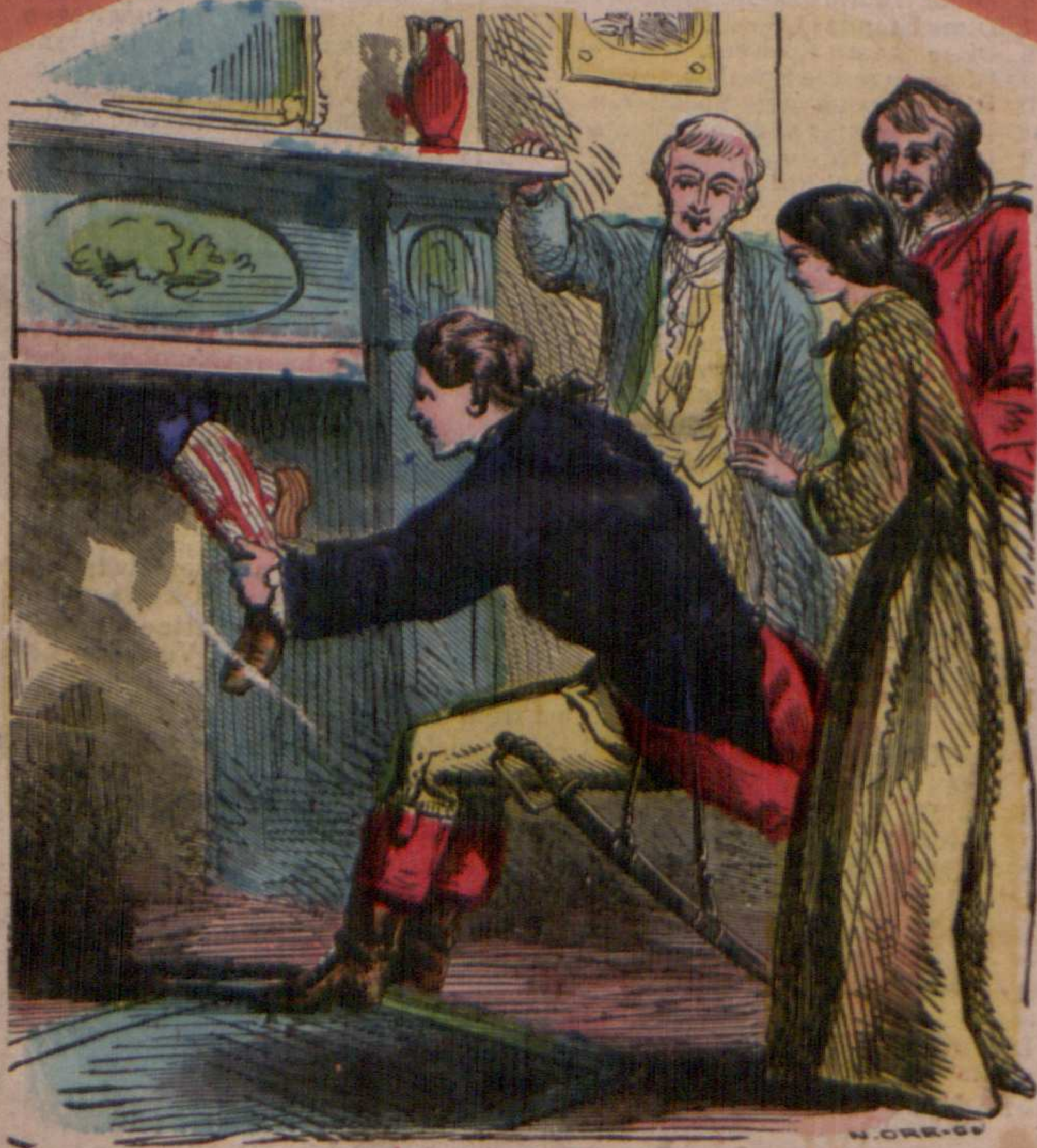
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shake hands and laugh. This, combined with the uproar of Honyost Schuyler, for the time drowned every thing else. When they had become somewhat quieted, Mr. Gardner said

"We were expecting you, Captain—Edith especially."

"I am glad to hear it," replied the officer, who had taken her hand, and who stood looking down in her radiant face. "I hope it will be the last time you will ever expect me."

"What do you mean?"

"As she has promised never to leave your roof, I ask permission to remain under it myself, as one of the most dutiful and faithful sons-in-law that you can possibly have—"

"Tut, tut, there's some of your foolish questions again. Ask her!"

"I have already done so."

"Well, I am sure that is sufficient, without bothering me—confound the noise."

Buck Bailey and Honyost Schuyler were indulging their mirth to an immoderate extent, but gradually they became more quiet, and their feelings grew more thoughtful and subdued, for they were disbanded volunteers, who were soon to pursue their ways in widely different spheres—Honyost to till the soil at Little Falls, and Buck to take up his march for the far West.

Captain Eugene Heath and Edith, his companion in life: they too, became more quiet, and their feelings more thoughtful and subdued as the years followed one after another, and until full of days and honor and happiness, they were finally laid in the valley with their fathers.

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| 346 Kirk, the Guide. | 401 The Ice-Flend. | 456 Backwoods Banditti. | 509 The Slave Sculptor. |
| 347 The Phantom Trail. | 402 The Red Prince. | 457 Ruby Roland. | 510 Backwoods Bride. |
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| 349 The Mad Miner. | 404 Sheet-Anchor Tom. | 459 Mohegan Maiden. | 512 Bill Biddon, Trapper |
| 350 Keen-eye, Ranger. | 405 Old Avoirdupois. | 460 The Quaker Scout. | 513 Outward Bound. |
| 351 Blue Belt, Guide. | 406 White Gladiator. | 461 Sumter's Scouts. | 514 East and West. |
| 352 On the Trail. | 407 Blue Clipper. | 462 The five Champions. | 515 The Indian Princess |
| 353 The Specter Spy. | 408 Red Dan. | 463 The Two Guards. | 516 The Forest Spy. |
| 354 Old Bald-head. | 409 The Fire-Eater. | 464 Quindaro. | 517 Graylock, the Guide. |
| 355 Red Knife, Chief. | 410 Blackhawk. | 465 Rob Ruskin. | 518 Off and On |
| 356 Sib Cone, Trapper. | 411 The Lost Ship. | 466 The Rival Rovers. | 519 Seth Jones. |
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| 358 Bashful Bill, Spy. | 413 White Serpent. | 468 Single Hand. | 521 Maltesha. |
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| 389 Jaguar Queen. | 444 Th Gray Scalp. | 498 Sagamore of Saco. | 550 Myra, the Child of |
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